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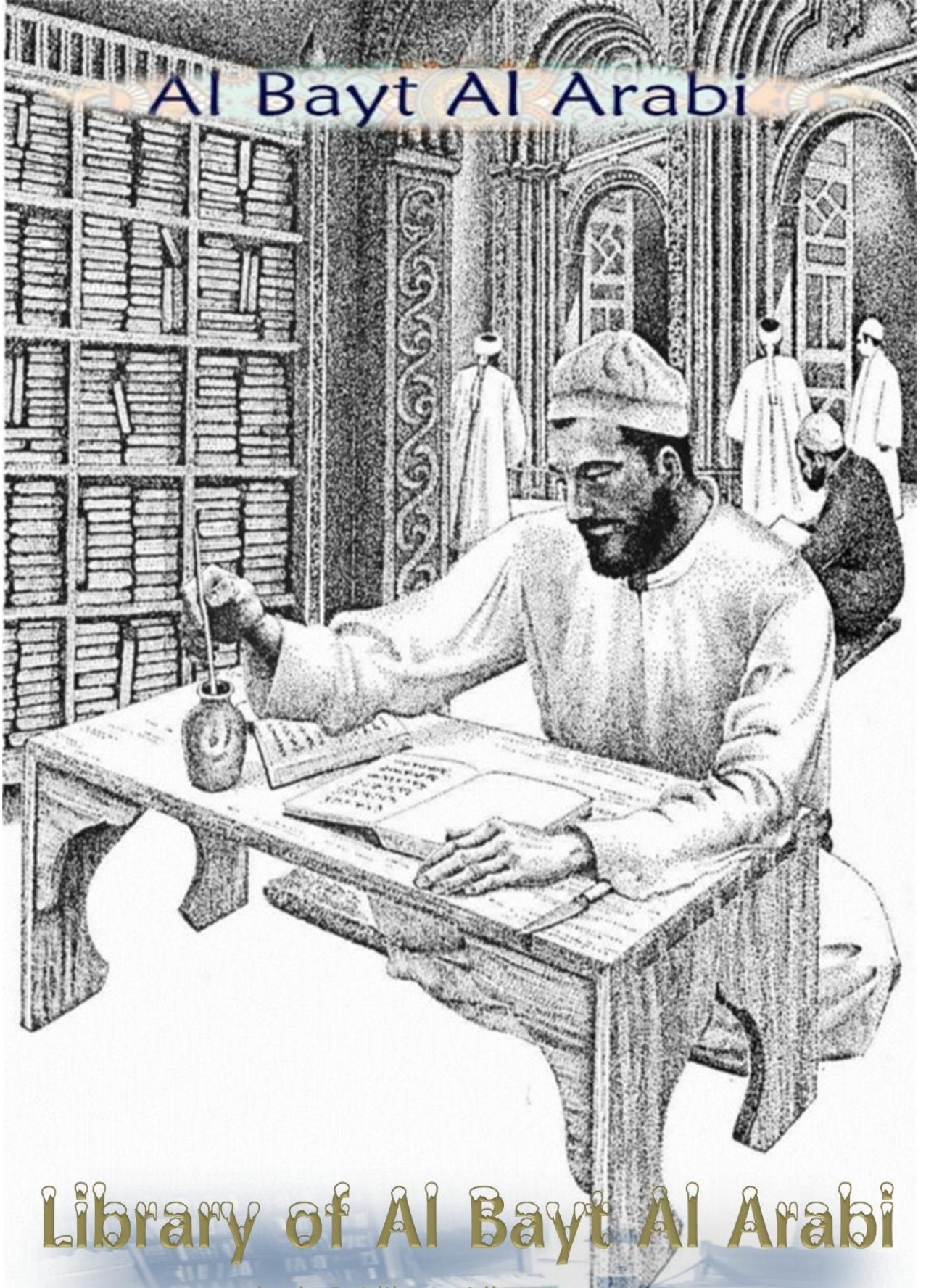
War and State Formation in Syria

Cemal Pasha's governorate during
World War I, 1914–17

M. Talha Çiçek

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During the First World War, Cemal Pasha attempted to establish direct control over Syria and thereby reaffirm Ottoman authority there through various policies of control, including the abolishment of local intermediaries.

Elaborating on these Ottoman policies of control, this book assesses Cemal Pasha's policies toward different political groups in Syrian society, including Arabists, Zionists, Christian clergymen and Armenian immigrants. The author then goes on to analyze Pasha's educational activities, the conscription of Syrians, both Muslim and Christian, and the reconstruction of the major Syrian cities, assessing how these policies contributed to his attempt to create ideal Ottoman citizens.

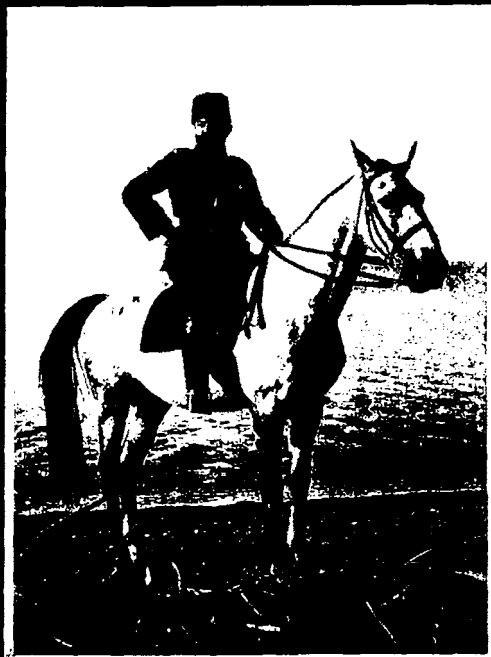
An important addition to existing literature on the social and political history of World War I, and contributing a new understanding of Ottoman Syria, and its transformation into a nation-state, this book will be of interest to students and scholars with an interest in state formation, Politics and History.

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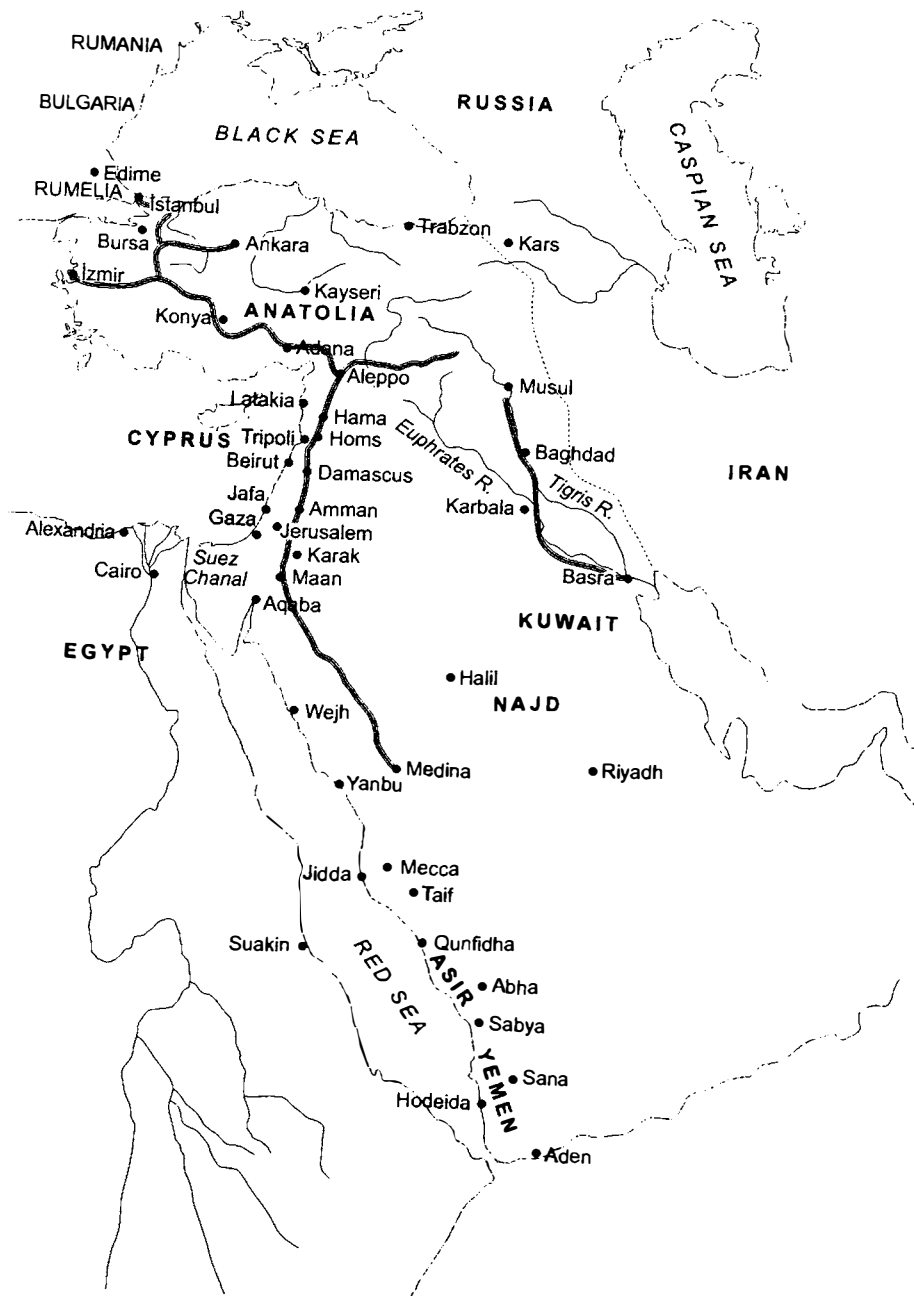
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List of abbreviations

AA	Auswaertiges Amtes
A.MTZ.CL	Mümtaze Kalemî, Cebel-i Lübnan
ATASE	Askerî Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Dairesi
BA-MA	Bundesarchiv-Militaerarchiv
BEO	Bab-ı Ali Evrak Odası
BOA	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri
CUP	Committee for Union and Progress
DH.EUM	Dahiliye Nezareti, Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdürlüğü
DH.EUM.EMN	Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumiye Şubesi Emniyet Kalemî
DH.EUM.KLM	Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdiriyyeti.
DH.EUM.KLU	Dahiliye Nezareti Kalem-i Umumi
DH-İ.UM	Dahiliye Nezareti, İdare-i Umumiye Evrakı
DH.KMS	Dahiliye Nezareti Kalem-i Mahsusa Müdiriyyeti
DH.MKT	Dahiliye Mektubi Kalemî
DH.MTV	Dahiliye mütenevvia
DH.ŞFR	Dahiliye Nezareti, Şifre Kalemî
DH.UMVM	Dahiliye Nezareti Umûr-ı Mahalliye-i Vilâyât Müdiriyyeti
EP	Enver Pasha Koleksiyonu
FO	Foreign Office
HHStA	Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv
HR.SYS	Hariciye Nezareti, Muhaberat-ı Umumiye Dairesi Siyasi Evrakı
İ.DUİT	Dosya Usulü İrade Tasnifi
KO	Kazım Orbay
ltq.	Türk Lirası
MAE	Ministère des Affaires Étrangères
MAEE	Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et Européennes
MF.MKT	Maarif Nezareti, Mektubi Kalemî
NA	United States National Archives
PA	Politisches Archives

PA-AA	Politisches Archiv des Auswaertiges Amtes
ŞD	Şura-yı Devlet
SHD	Service Historique de la Défense, Vincennes
TTK	Türk Tarih Kurumu
TNA	The National Archives
USNA	United States National Archives
WO	War Office
WWI	World War I



Introduction

Multiple backgrounds

Of course it was our one hope to free ourselves through the World War from all conventions, which meant so many attacks on our independence, and to be able to live in [the] future as an independent and free nation, which in its own territory, of its own initiative introduces the reforms which local necessities have made imperative. Just it was our chief aim to annul the Capitulations and the Lebanon statute ...¹

Ottoman entry into World War I and Cemal Pasha's appointment to Syria

Because of the aims laid out in the above quotation, the outbreak of World War I had a fundamental impact on the course of Ottoman political life. Immediately after the commencement of hostilities in Europe, the Ottoman government, dominated by members of the CUP (Committee for Union and Progress), ascribing great importance to the freedom of governmental affairs from all internal and external political interventions for the strengthening of the Ottoman Empire, announced the abolition of the capitulations and terminated all the privileges of foreign states in Ottoman lands. All the Great Powers of Europe, including Germany, protested this decision.² Simultaneously, the CUP leaders began to seek a military alliance with the Great Powers to avoid the possible partitioning of the empire after the conclusion of the war. The failure to receive any guarantee from the Entente powers regarding the integrity of the Ottoman Empire³ pushed the Unionists toward Germany for an alliance in order to realize the aims described in the quotation above. At the end of the process, an alliance treaty was signed with the German government, which gave an equal status to the Ottoman Empire as its ally.⁴ As a result of intense pressure by Germany, on November 10 the Ottoman cabinet declared war against the Entente powers and their allies Belgium, Montenegro, and Serbia.⁵

The Ottoman authorities took the declaration of war as an occasion to enact measures to save the country from the yoke of the Great Powers, throwing off all varieties of international pressure, and to increase the loyalty of their citizens. In Cemal Pasha's words, the aim of the CUP leaders was

“either to live like an honorable nation or to exit the stage of history gloriously.”⁶ With these goals in mind, the Ottoman Empire entered a new period of political and military mobilization for “full independence” by way of a reorganization of the empire in the direction of the Young Turks’ political ideas. As part of these ideas, the Unionist leaders, upon the suggestion of Germany, also planned to propagate the liberation of Muslims under the rule of the Entente states in the context of the policy of pan-Islamism, which aimed at instigating rebellion among the Muslim peoples under the rule of the Entente.⁷ In this regard, they primarily performed military operations within territories under the direct or indirect rule of the Entente powers neighboring the Ottoman lands on the advice of Germany. They also used the freedom of action that came with the proclamation of war to secure “the internal order of the empire” and forestall any future loss of territory that could result from the demands of non-Turkish nationalist movements.

Immediately after the declaration of war, the third man in the CUP and Minister of the Marine, Cemal Pasha, was sent to Syria to put these policies into practice in the Syrian realm when he was 42 years old. He states in his memoirs that he took over the command of the Ottoman 4th Army in order to “prepare (and carry through) the attack on the Canal, and also maintain peace and internal order in Syria.”⁸ Cemal was appointed as commander-in-chief of the 4th Army and governor general of the Syrian District authorized with absolute power over both civil and military officials. The proclaimed reason for his presence in Syria was the recapturing of Egypt from the British “yoke.”

The second goal toward which Cemal devoted major efforts was to strengthen the weak image of the Ottoman government in the eyes of Syrians by reinforcing Ottoman authority and increasing the state’s direct control over the peoples in Syria, as well as undertaking the necessary steps to make Syrians better Ottomans, loyal to the idea of the unity of the empire and opposed to any intervention by foreign states. The extent of his authority made Cemal Pasha far more than a military commander; he was rather a governor of all the provinces in geographical Syria, including Palestine and West Arabia. His position was an exceptional one. All the commanders in the coastal cities and the whole of the gendarmerie divisions in this region were subordinated to Cemal’s command. All the civil bureaucrats were required to implement his orders on political issues regarding the defense of the country and the maintenance of internal order. The bureaucrats in Syria had to give top priority to the orders of Cemal, rather than those of the central government.⁹ In the beginning, the governors of the principal cities in Syria, such as Beirut, Damascus and Aleppo, were surprised by this decision and they complained to the central government about it. But an order from the Ministry of Interior compelled them to accept Cemal’s authority in Syria.¹⁰

Immediately after his appointment, as precondition of his agreement with Enver, Cemal sent a telegram to Enver and requested that it be announced to all it may concern that there should be no intervention in the military and political affairs of Syria without his consent.¹¹ In short, in the words of

Muhittin Birgen, the chief editor of the *Tanin* newspaper during the war period, he was “the regent of the Sultan” (Sultan Naibi) in Syria,¹² and, as described by a German military official, the “Vizekönig” (Vice-king) there.¹³ Similarly, his chief of staff, Ali Fuad Bey, called him the “uncrowned king” of Syria.¹⁴

Besides the organization of the expedition against Egypt, Cemal would secure the maintenance of “peace and internal order in Syria.” These are the key concepts for understanding the nature of Cemal’s rule in Syria and the reasons behind his actions toward the different sections of Syrian society. Cemal saw the maintenance of a perpetual peace in Syria as a prerequisite to the establishment of the full authority of the Ottoman state there in a way that would continue to work smoothly even after the war. To achieve this, the Syrians had to be made as loyal as the Turks to the ideal of Ottoman unity and had to oppose Syria’s occupation by any foreign power. From Cemal’s viewpoint, all obstacles to reaching this goal had to be either checked or destroyed. As will be seen in detail in the following chapters, he believed that the establishment of such an order required the elimination of the social and religious interlayers that prevented the penetration of state authority into the Syrian realm and obstructed the allegiance of Syrians to the state as was expected of citizens of nation-states. The term “consolidated state,” used by Charles Tilly to describe the “nation-less” modern states governing “directly” and “uniformly” in “clearly bounded territories,” is useful for understanding the state model Cemal had in mind.¹⁵ His struggles with the Arabists, Zionists, and other independent-minded religious and administrative bodies, such as the Maronite clergy and the government of Lebanon, were aimed at realizing this vision. Obviously, all these projects were quite appropriate for the CUP’s ideal of a monolithic state.

Geographically, Syria was important because it was a bridge connecting Anatolia to the Hijaz and included the city of Jerusalem, which had been the first kiblāh (geographic orientation of prayer) for Muslims before Mecca and was therefore sacred for Muslims. Moreover, it included a large portion of the Arab population, a people who had played a fundamental role in the history of Islam. For these reasons, the CUP leaders set a premium on the fortification of Ottoman authority in Syria, hoping to maintain the Ottoman Empire’s claim to the caliphate and its pan-Islamist legitimacy and, thereby, to continue its influence over the Muslim world. Before proceeding to an evaluation of the existing literature to determine the contributions that will be made by the present study, a description of Cemal’s prior history of the Syrian governorate will provide a better understanding of the reasons behind his appointment to Syria as the “authority builder.”

Cemal’s pre-history of Syrian governorate

Ahmed Cemal Pasha was born in Mytilene on May 6, 1872. His father, Mehmed Nesib Bey, was a pharmacist in the Ottoman army. Cemal

graduated from the Kuleli Military High School (Kuleli Askeri İdâdîsi) in 1890. Following his graduation from the Imperial War School (Mekteb-i Harbiye-i Şâhâne) in 1893, he completed his education at the Ottoman War Academy (Erkân-ı harbiyye). He rose to the rank of an *erkân-ı harb* captain in 1895. He was employed in the construction department (*istihkâm inşaat şubesi*) in Kırkkilise within the body of the Second Ottoman Army until 1898. From this date onwards, he was appointed to Salonika as the chief of staff of the reserve squadron (*redif fırkası*) under the command of the 3rd Army. In 1905, he was promoted to the rank of major.¹⁶

At the beginning of his appointment to Salonika, Cemal sympathized with the CUP organization, although he did not actively participate in its activities until October 1906, when he became a member of the Ottoman Freedom Society (Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti), a society in Salonika inspired by the CUP's ideas¹⁷ that was established on September 5, 1906.¹⁸ In Salonika he was assigned as the military inspector of railroad construction. He would control and accelerate railroad construction around Salonika.¹⁹ By means of this post, Cemal could easily travel in Rumelia and make a significant contribution to the organization of the Freedom Society there.²⁰ His efforts to spread the influence of the society in Rumelia made him one of the most prominent figures in the group. On December 26, 1906, Cemal was assigned by the society to engage in negotiations with pro-CUP officers to open a branch in Bitola. As a result of his visit, on December 30, 1906 a center of the society was established there.²¹ It is also worth mentioning that he was a member of the Veritas Lodge of the Freemasons.²²

Following the 1908 Revolution,²³ Cemal was selected by the central office of the CUP in Salonika as a delegate for negotiations with the government together with Talat, Hakkı, Necib, Rahmi, Hüseyin and Cavid Beys.²⁴ After that, he was chosen as a member of the reform delegation (Heyet-i Islahiye) to investigate possible reforms in eastern Anatolia.²⁵ Because of the outbreak of the 31 March Incident the dispatch of this delegation to eastern Anatolia was abandoned.²⁶ Cemal then fled to Salonika and subsequently returned to Istanbul with the Hareket Ordusu (Movement Army) under the command of Mahmud Şevket Pasha.²⁷ When the army arrived at İstanbul, Cemal was chosen as a member of the court martial created to provide peace and order in the capital. After the restoration of order, Cemal Bey was appointed to the sub-governorate (*mutasarrıflık*) of Üsküdar. In this post, Cemal stood out with his policies, which could be interpreted as steps in the direction of the “Westernization” and “control” of society. He applied strict measures to give order to public life there.²⁸ The most outstanding initiatives applied by Cemal in Üsküdar were the prohibition of walking on the streets while wearing loungewear like loose robes (*entari*) for men and wearing pattens (*takunya*) without socks. Those measures were aimed at putting an end to the “recklessness” (*laubalilik*) of the people of İstanbul. Cemal implemented these prohibitions strictly, without exception.²⁹ As a result, according to the famous author Yahya Kemal, he was seen in those days as a newly emerging

reformer.³⁰ The prominent Westernist Abdullah Cevdet interpreted his actions as “opposition to the continuance of the lifestyle belonging to the Middle Ages in the twentieth century in the capital” of the Ottoman Empire. This was enough “to see the tendency in his [Cemal’s] mind [*ruh*] toward order [*inizam*] and toward the customs of the civilized world.”³¹

On August 2, 1909, as a result of the outbreak of the conflict between Muslims and the Armenians in April 1909, Cemal Bey was appointed to the governorate of Adana to put an end to the conflict in the city and provide order there.³² His activities in Adana reveal both his personality and his political attitude toward the problems of the Ottoman Empire. The British vice-consul described Cemal as follows:

Djemal Bey dressed like an English gentleman, and possesses a most courteous presence, a fair knowledge of French, and a pretty wit ... I should judge that he possesses an untiring energy and a determination brooking no interference ... The principal danger to his career is perhaps its rather headlong nature.³³

In another report the vice-consul states that Cemal was excessively optimistic, like most of the Young Turks.³⁴

Immediately after his arrival, Cemal brought together the local Muslim *ulama* (scholars) and notables and “advised” them to end the hostilities in the city and to mend ties between the Armenians and Muslims.³⁵ Similarly, Cemal addressed the heads of the Armenian and Syrian Churches and, in the words of the British vice-consul, left “a happy impression on all his hearers.”³⁶

Similar to his later construction works in Syria, Cemal applied the labor force of the local people to the reconstruction of the city that was ruined by the 1909 Armenian massacres. As described by the British vice-consul in Adana, Cemal was “dead set against idling and battenning on temporary relief doles, and means to drive the loafers from tavern and bazaar to lend a hand in the work of reconstruction.”³⁷ At the public reading of his *firman* (imperial decree) of appointment, Cemal “called down a thousand curses ... on the authors and perpetrators of the massacres, referred to the necessity of the union of all the classes in the work of reconstruction, and declared his intention or suppressing all idling with a strong hand.” The governor also created committees for the restoration of peace and order in the city under his presidency in collaboration with foreign assistance organizations. These committees included “a committee for the finding of work for the unemployed,” “a committee to draw up a plan for the reconstruction of the ruined quarter of the town,” and “a committee to draw up a plan for the foundation of orphanages.”³⁸

In a month Cemal was able to clean up the ruined houses and streets with prison labor gangs.³⁹ He wanted to reconstruct the city “enlarging the streets with a view to tramway traffic, and of laying out the city on an approved model.”⁴⁰ Before the winter many of the Armenians in the villages were

settled in the houses.⁴¹ In cities between December 11 and 15, twenty-five Muslims were hanged, having been found responsible for the Armenian massacres.⁴² By December 13, 1909, with the zealous efforts of the governor of Adana, according to the report of the British vice-consul, all was well in Adana.⁴³ The vice-consul states in another report that, by February 1910, “much material progress” had been “made with relief and rebuilding” of the city.⁴⁴ By February 23, the vice-consul could list the following improvements that had been made in Adana:

- 1 The general condition of the town and its inhabitants is satisfactory, and promises well for the future.
- 2 General security is good.
- 3 Local trade is reviving, and things are on the upgrade.
- 4 The ruined houses are gradually being rebuilt.
- 5 The vali is taking everything in hand in a most energetic way, and is the object of commendation from all classes of the population.⁴⁵

Cemal's relations with the British vice-consul in Adana were very strong, and the vice-consul clearly saw Cemal in a positive light. An interview between the vice-consul and Cemal illuminates the latter's political ideas and gives us important information about his evaluations of general Ottoman politics, his ideas about the opposition to the CUP, his approach to any alliance with foreign powers, etc. The following remarks, reported by the vice-consul, are valuable for understanding Cemal's mentality of giving a new order to the Ottoman state by way of controlling the “autonomous” structures and opposition organizations within the boundaries of the empire:

Touching on the general conditions of the country, he [Cemal] said that the present time was most critical as “they” [the CUP] had many enemies, but that, if, the present line of the policy could be continued for five years, all opposition would be done away with and the country saved. To this end, went on the Vali, a general disarmament [disarmament] must be carried out; we have found a “pretext” in Albania for this and we shall now disarm the Hauran, and Syria; afterwards we shall do the same to Kurdistan; the Yemen is not so important and such measures will not be necessary there yet awhile. Then branching into more general politics His Excellency said that he for his part did not want to see Turkey entering into any alliance whatsoever at present; the country was far to[o] weak and poor and would, therefore, be certainly given the worst of the bargain.⁴⁶

It is clear in these statements that Cemal had a monolithic and authoritarian state in mind and saw the opposition, as well as the continued existence of armed autonomous structures, like tribes in Hauran and Kurdistan, as a threat to the Ottoman Empire. The quotation is also valuable to understand

Cemal's policies toward the various religious and political groups during his governorate in Syria.

After the restoration of peace and order in the city on August 26, 1911 Cemal was sent to Baghdad by the Ottoman government to restore Ottoman authority in that province and its surrounding areas, as it had been weakened by the increase of British influence there, and to reorganize the state institutions in the city.⁴⁷ As stated in his *firman* of appointment, which was read publicly at the *saray* (office) of the governor on the August 30, Cemal was "to turn the rivers of Mesopotamia to account (?) [*sic*] by means of navigation and irrigation." For that purpose, "at least 40,000 turkish liras would be granted annually." His authority over the Bureaucracy was quite extensive. Cemal was "empowered to appoint and dismiss all civil officers, except those of the ordinary judicial and Shar'i departments." Similarly, the governor was "to reorganize the Police and open a police school if possible." Furthermore, he had some authority over the bureaucrats in the neighboring provinces. As expressed in the *firman*, "in the case of urgent or important internal questions" Cemal Bey was "authorized to summon the Wali [Governor] of Basrah to Baghdad for consultation." According to documents discovered by Artuç, Cemal was authorized to solve most of the important issues for the Ottoman government in Mosul and Basra.⁴⁸ Finally, he would "formulate a scheme, with the least possible delay, for the settlement of the nomad tribes upon the land," which could be considered as a component of giving a modern "order" to the state's representation in Baghdad.⁴⁹

Cemal's speech following the reading of the *firman* was quite indicative of the aims behind his appointment to Baghdad. Quite the reverse of his "pro-British" and "Ottomanist" attitude in Adana, Cemal was an "Islamist" and "anti-imperialist" in Baghdad. Similar to his anti-French policy in Syria, and in accordance with his strong conviction about the necessity of consolidated state authority over the conduct of its citizens for the continuation of the Ottoman Empire, Cemal aimed at the reduction of British influence in Iraq since the British had designs on the territory, as France did in Syria. According to the reports of the British consul in Baghdad,

His speech was garnished with pious Muhammedan expressions; and to have made slanting allusions to foreigners against whom, he said, "an iron door" must be closed at Basrah. The "iron door" phrase is not reproduced in the published account of the speech. He is also said to have remarked that "the hand coming from the south must be warded off."⁵⁰

In addition, Cemal heralded the construction of a great street through the middle of the town to carry an electric tramway to provide a modern appearance to the city. His first action reported by the British consul was to dismiss the Christian mayor of Baghdad and to replace him with a Muslim, which can be seen as an attempt to win the hearts of the Muslim population.⁵¹

Throughout his time as governor of Baghdad, Cemal maintained his Islamist and anti-imperialist attitude in his meetings and visits. In the first days of his governorship, he visited Muadhdham, where the tomb of Abu Hanifah, the great Sunni theologian, is situated. According to the report of the British consul, at that time, similar to the Selahaddin-i Eyyubi Külliyesi in Jerusalem founded by Cemal during his governorate in Syria, the Ottoman government had proposed the establishment of a famous college on the model of the Nizamiyeh which existed at Baghdad in the days of the Abbasid caliphate. In this visit, Cemal expressed his unhappiness with the fact that the Ottoman government had only one school in Baghdad.⁵²

During his time in Baghdad as governor, Cemal's anti-imperialist language showed itself on every occasion. According to the British consul, in a dinner meeting held in his house with all the newspaper editors in Baghdad on September 17, 1911 the governor stated that "the contract given to the Germans for the construction of the Baghdad Railroad would ruin Turkey." In this speech Cemal accused Abdulhamid (the Ottoman sultan before 1908) of "giving 'too much face' to foreigners in general, with the result that the said foreigners now considered themselves the rulers of the country." The supremacy of the foreigners had increased to such an extent that "even foreign travelers conducted themselves in Turkey as if they were Walis." He promised the journalists of Baghdad that the present constitutional government of Turkey would not "give way to foreigners any longer," adding, "The interests of Turkish subjects should be considered before those of foreigners; at present they came in the second place." Consequently, Cemal "advised the editors to impress these ideas on those whom they met." He also promised that the official Baghdad newspaper, the *Zaura*, "should again appear in Arabic as well as Turkish, as was the custom before Nazim Pasha's time." Similarly, in another meeting at the military club, he added that Europeans were "accustomed to think that the Turks are afraid of them. This is no longer the case, and Europeans ought to know it."⁵³

Cemal did what was necessary to forestall the spread of British activities in the province of Baghdad. Two examples are significant in this regard. In April 1912 the British consul appointed British officials in official British dress as guides for Indian Shiites who were visiting Najaf and Karbala. The Indians entered Baghdad accompanied by these British officials. The governor strongly protested this action and reported to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry that the real aim of this action was to employ the British officials in Baghdad.⁵⁴ According to Cemal, allowing the British consul to employ those officials would increase the influence of his state while humiliating the Ottoman governor.⁵⁵ Upon Cemal's request, the Ottoman Ministry of Interior prohibited the British officials from continuing their work.⁵⁶

Another problem with the British consul emerged due to the establishment of a British court in Kazimiyeh and the appointment of British *muhtars* (the ruler of a quarter or village in the Ottoman administrative system) by the consul to certain quarters in the same city. The *muhtars* would provide

residence permits to British citizens who did not have them. Frustrated with this action, Cemal urgently demanded that the Ottoman Foreign Ministry intervene in the issue, close the court, and dismiss the *muhtars*. The governor threatened the Ministry of Interior that he would resign from his post if his request were not acted upon. As a result, the British consul visited Cemal and agreed with him on the closure of the court and the dismissal of the *muhtars*.⁵⁷

Similar to the attitude he would adopt in Syria and in accordance with his belief in the threat of opposition parties to the unity of the Ottoman Empire, Cemal also struggled with the Ottoman opposition movements in Baghdad. He wholeheartedly strove for the victory of the CUP candidates in Baghdad in the 1912 elections for the Ottoman Parliament and made an effort against the candidates of the Liberty and Concord Party (*Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*, hereafter LCP).⁵⁸ According to Muhammed Kamil Bey, a member of the LCP, Cemal left his post for three months to campaign for the Unionist candidates. He sought cooperation from members of the judiciary to prevent the activities of the opposition. In the last days of his governorate in Baghdad, on August 3, 1912, Cemal closed the LCP branch in the city.⁵⁹

In addition to emphasizing the European threat to Muslims and the struggle to prevent it, as well as his attempts to “do away with” the opposition movement, Cemal also attempted to highlight the “backwardness” of Muslims and stressed the need for development, with a strong Islamist emphasis, to save Muslims from European colonization. In one of his speeches to the prominent *ulama* of Baghdad, his remarks referring to the glorious past of Islamic civilization were very close to those of the famous Islamist scholars Afghani and Abduh:

The Muhammadan scholars of Baghdad who composed and put into literary form [*sic*] the invention of the clock,-that orderer of the time of man,-the proof of the roundness of the world, the determination of the meridian and, finally, countless and innumerable eternal monuments including medicine, philosophy, literature, mathematical sciences and astronomy, breathed the air of this very land, were warmed by this very sun, slaked their thirst with the water of this very land, and lived on the natural products afforded by this very land for the use of humanity.

But, alas, the successors who came after them did not make the necessary effort to follow the traces of their glorious ways; the bright sun of learning and knowledge which had been revealed in the land of Iraq became gradually dim; and naturally, in this manner, wealth and affluence disappearing, they were left in a state of ignorance, nomadism, dispersion, and weakness. Some attribute the present ruined state of the country to the 33-year long Hamidian regime, but this view is not correct; the period of decline of the land of Iraq began five or six hundred years ago, and the Hamidian regime has only been the cause of is reaching an extreme point.⁶⁰

As will be shown in Chapter 5, Cemal showed great interest in the restoration of historical monuments during his time as governor in Syria. It seems that he had a similar interest while he was in Baghdad. In the second week after his appointment, Cemal visited Salman Pak, on the left bank of the Tigris, near which were the celebrated ruins of Ctesiphon and Seleucia. The British consul stated that the aim of the visit was unknown. However, its aim may have been to inspect the monuments to prevent them from being smuggled away by the British and to keep them in the boundaries of the Ottoman state.⁶¹

The change of political balance in mid-1912 to the detriment of the CUP meant the end of Cemal Bey's time in Baghdad. Upon the accession of the Freedom Party to power, on August 12, 1912, Cemal resigned from his post and returned to Istanbul.⁶²

Upon the outbreak of the Balkan Wars, Cemal joined the army to take charge in the war. He was appointed as the commander of auxiliaries from Konya and his troops had to retreat like the other Ottoman forces. He stayed in this post until November 14, 1912, when he was stricken by cholera in the midst of an epidemic.⁶³

Following the First Balkan War, the CUP carried out a *coup d'état* (called Bab-ı Ali Baskını) and captured power. Immediately after that, on January 27, 1913, Cemal, who was famous for his "disciplinarian" character and abilities as an "organizer," was appointed as "military governor of Istanbul" (*Istanbul muhafızı*) with broad authority to provide "order" in the city.⁶⁴ In Cemal's own words, this immediately led to his involvement in the general policy of the empire. He managed to restore public order in Istanbul and prevent a counter-coup against the CUP. Two measures applied by Cemal Bey during his time as governor in Istanbul are worth considering to help understand his perspective and character. First, "There were ... a number of smugglers who were offering smuggled tobacco (in Government packets) in the streets of the city, Sultan Hamam, Sirkedji [*sic*], and Mahmud Pasha Hill and Bayadzid [*sic*] Square."⁶⁵ According to Cemal, this open smuggling showed the weakness of the government in the eyes of the people. Therefore, he "announced to all those concerned that anyone who indulged in illicit trading, whether wholesale or retail, would be arrested and banished from Constantinople." In the next week, he had four or five of these individuals deported, and "the court martial passed sentence on a few smugglers who were caught in a kiosk not far from the Seraglio." As Cemal wrote, "the result was that the common swindling which had become an everyday occurrence was soon exceptional, and the people of Constantinople and its suburbs could henceforth enjoy perfect security."⁶⁶

The second measure is even more helpful in demonstrating Cemal's vision of modernization. In Cemal's own words, "there were many people in Constantinople who indulged in the vicious habit of making amorous remarks to Mohammedan ladies as they passed them out walking, on the boats and bridges, or in the streets and bazaars." Those people "laid hands on elegant and well-dressed women." Cemal applied severe measures against them and

threatened such people with exile to inner Anatolia. After punishing four or five men, the “women were able to walk in the streets without further molestation.”⁶⁷

Cemal’s interpretation of this measure is important for clarifying his approach to the place of women in the “development” and “modernization” of a country. He states in his memoirs:

For the first time a definite step had been taken to place the personal freedom of Turkish women on a secure basis ... I believe firmly in the important part which woman is called upon to play not only in social life, but also in public affairs ... I am absolutely convinced that the civilising agencies of a country can best and soonest be promoted with the help of woman, and that those nations which keep their womankind in a state of slavery are on the high road of inevitable decay.⁶⁸

From these remarks it can be concluded that the reforms carried out by Mustafa Kemal regarding the status of women in the early Republican era had also been seen by Cemal as necessary for the development of a country. Similarly, his efforts toward the opening of girls’ schools in Syria under the supervision of Halide Edib to increase of the education of women emanated from this conviction.

After the abolition of the military governorate of Istanbul, on December 16, 1913, Cemal was appointed as Minister of Public Works (Nafia Nezareti). Although he prepared some railroad and chausseed road construction projects, as well as some irrigation projects, on March 11, 1914, some 85 days later, he was appointed Minister of Navy.⁶⁹ He also made some reform projects for the Ottoman navy, but some 10 months later, upon the entry of the Ottoman Empire into World War I, Cemal was appointed governor general of Syria and commander of the 4th Army there, at the age of 42.

Cemal’s prior history and personality played a crucial role in his appointment to the governorate general of Syria. As will be analyzed below, from its very inception the CUP wanted to establish equal levels of Ottoman authority throughout the Ottoman fatherland. Cemal’s character and background as a “disciplinarian,” “reformer,” “state-worshipper” (*devletperest*), “anti-imperialist,” “anti-oppositionist,” and “order builder” made him a suitable candidate for the Syrian governorate, where ensuring the authority of the Ottoman state became crucial after the loss of the empire’s Balkan provinces. In Adana, he had successfully restored the interrupted state order with his severe measures and adopted an Ottomanist discourse. In Baghdad, Cemal struggled with both British influence and the activities of the Arabists. Because of his experiences in Baghdad, according to his memoirs, Cemal was treated by the CUP as an expert on the Arab affairs.⁷⁰ In Istanbul, he suppressed a counter-revolt of the opposition and gave strength to the state with his severe actions against “disorderliness,” and again, in Baghdad, he struggled with the opposition. As a result of all these experiences, Cemal was seen by the CUP as the

most suitable candidate for the Syrian governorate general, where the authority of the state was seen by Unionists as weak. Therefore, Cemal was sent to Syria with the extraordinary authority to re-form the Ottoman state there in a modern sense.

Nature of the Ottoman reforms in Syria: an assessment of the literature

A number of scholarly works published over the last decades have greatly contributed to our understanding of the nature of Ottoman modernization in the Arab provinces. One of the first texts that must be mentioned in this context is *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine, 1840–1861* by Moshe Ma'oz. This study evaluates the Tanzimat reforms in the Syrian provinces during the years 1840 to 1861 and describes their impact on government and administration, on social and economic developments and on the position of the empire's non-Muslim subjects. Ma'oz argues that these reforms "brought an end to centuries of confusion and backwardness and opened a new age of stability and modernization. During these years local forces were destroyed, regional autonomies undermined, and a solid foundation of Ottoman direct rule was established."⁷¹ Taking the entire century of reforms into consideration Albert Hourani concludes that the reforms, which "would, if carried to their logical conclusion, have destroyed the independent power of the notables," created a new group of local elites, whose interests conflicted with the centralizing Ottoman state.⁷² Subsequently, Philip Khoury extends this approach in his book on Damascus, called *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism*.⁷³

It should be noted that Ma'oz, Hourani, and Khoury wrote these particular works when modernization theories dominated the field. Accordingly, they praise government centralization. However, later generations paid closer attention to the need for dialogue and cooperation with provincial forces for such "modernizing" drives to be successful. In this context, in his study on the nature of the *Tanzimat* reforms, Jens Hassen reflects on the effects of the Ottoman reforms on the local elite during this period:

The practices of integration that evolved during the stormy mid-decades of the nineteenth century represented multiple processes of negotiations between imperial and local interest groups and their representations. Focusing specifically on certain imperial strategies of crisis management in the Arab provinces, such as imperial inspection tours, local petitions and councils, and model provinces, there emerged distinct and subtle modes of contestation, appropriation and co-operation in the provincial peripheries that determined the application of *Tanzimat* reforms. Moreover, what have consistently been considered impositions of state power, malicious or benevolent, under closer scrutiny turned out to be attributable to socio-political processes and agencies in the provincial peripheries that were then adopted in İstanbul as imperial legislation.⁷⁴

Leila Fawaz demonstrates, in the case of Beirut, another aspect that compelled Ottoman officials to take the local notables into consideration. According to her study, during the period 1840 to 1860 “the duality of European and Ottoman influence in Beirut insured a certain political and social openness that remained characteristic of the city in modern times.”⁷⁵ As a result of this competition, the local notables could find a place in the local political life of Beirut. Similarly, in her recent study on the transition from Ottoman rule to the British mandate in Jerusalem, Abigail Jacobson demonstrates how the local religious communities were influential in the administration of the city until the outbreak of the war, and how this influence was hindered upon the arrival of Cemal Pasha.⁷⁶ According to studies of the Hamidian era, the situation did not change in this period and competition between the Ottomans and the European Powers gave shape to the local politics in Syria. Adil Baktiaya, for example, demonstrates how this competition played out through educational institutions. In his words, “the aim of the [Ottoman] State’s centralization policy and its reform efforts after 1860 was to check Western penetration.”⁷⁷ However, Baktiaya does not emphasize the role of the local notables in this rivalry.

The situation was similar after the proclamation of the second constitution. Hasan Kayalı’s acclaimed study, *Arabs and Young Turks*,⁷⁸ sheds light on the Arab policy of the CUP, as well Arab concerns between 1908 and 1918. In this regard, he demonstrates that the ideology of Islamism remarkably overshadowed Arab and Turkish nationalisms during this period. On the other hand, Kayalı demonstrates that the CUP leaders generally took the political demands of the Arab notables into consideration “for a larger representation in state offices and a wider use of Arabic in the Arab provinces.”⁷⁹ According to him:

The Young Turk policies were perceived as discriminatory partly because the Unionist purge of the Hamidian cadres from important positions had resulted in the dismissal of many Arabs, the influential ones from the palace coterie of Abdülhamid ... Setting aside the aberration of the Hamidian regime, which departed from bureaucratic norms in the recruitment of a palace administration, the Young Turk period compared more favorably to past patterns with respect to the recruitment of Arabs. A comparison of the 1877–78 and 1908 Parliaments does not show a relative decline in the size of Arab representation.⁸⁰

However, Kayalı left unexamined the rupture in the Arabist and Syrian policy of the CUP beginning with the appointment of Cemal as governor general in Syria. Immediately after Cemal’s arrival in Syria, the policy of reconciliation which had been followed throughout the whole of the reform era despite occasional deviations was abandoned and a policy of control and elimination was adopted. Similarly, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 1, the Unionist intention to eliminate the Arabist movement, which belonged to the pre-war

period, was not taken into consideration by Kayalı. Furthermore, the CUP rarely saw the Arabists as sincerely demanding reform in Syria. Rather, the Unionists saw them as purely self-interested. This point was also underestimated in Kayalı's study.

Another study that treats Cemal's governorate is Nevzat Artuç's work *Cemal Paşa: Askeri ve Siyasi Hayatı*.⁸¹ The author dedicates more than 100 pages to the Syrian period in Cemal's career. Half of them are a summary of the military preparations for the Egyptian expedition. The other half try to describe his administrative activities in Syria. Although the book becomes engaged in some analysis at times, there is no consistent narrative throughout the work. Furthermore, the language of the book implies that it was written by an admirer of Cemal Pasha, someone who really likes what he did, rather than someone trying to understand and contextualize the period of Cemal's rule in the history of Syria. Many critical subjects for the period are glossed over in a few pages. For example, the famine, the most staggering event of the period for the general population, is summarized in four pages without touching upon its reasons and consequences. Similarly, educational activities are handled in three pages. Evaluation of the existing literature is sometimes made with scanty information. For example, Kayalı's study, which is a pioneer in terms of its use of Ottoman sources in early twentieth-century Arab history, is evaluated with these words: "Kayalı disregarded the Turkish archives, the main source of the subject and was influenced by foreign writers and archives."⁸² He subsequently accuses Kayalı of being subjective in his evaluations of Cemal Pasha.

In recent years, another discussion has emerged regarding the character of Ottoman modernization in the Arab provinces. This discussion was initiated by Ussama Makdisi. He claims that the Turkish rulers of the empire adopted an orientalist attitude in their treatment of the Arabs. He maintains that "in an age of Western dominated modernity, every nation creates its own orient. Nineteenth century Ottoman Empire was no exception."⁸³ In Makdisi's viewpoint:

Through efforts to study, discipline, and improve imperial subjects, Ottoman reform created a notion of the pre-modern within the empire in a manner akin to the way European colonial administrators represented their colonial subjects. This process culminated in the articulation of a modern Ottoman *Turkish* nation that had to lead the empire's other putatively stagnant ethnic and national groups into an Ottoman modernity.⁸⁴

In a similar manner, he asserts:

Nowhere, perhaps, was this paradox of Ottoman reform-inclusivist insofar as it sought to integrate all provinces and peoples into an official nationalism of Ottomanism and yet also temporally segregated and ultimately racially differentiated-more apparent than in the Arab provinces of the empire.⁸⁵

In addition, in “the progressive way of civilization,” the West was in the forefront while the Ottomans followed them in advance of the Arabs. Makdisi suggests that there was a hierarchy descending from Westerners to Turks and then Arabs in the worldview of the Ottoman elites. Like the colonial governments of the Western states, the Ottomans legitimized their domination over non-Turkish territories, above all in the Arab lands under their rule, with a civilizing mission. In sum, he implies that the Turks tried to establish a colonial empire over the other ethnicities of the Ottoman Empire, as the French had done in Africa and the British in India.

Considering Cemal Pasha’s governorate and its background, Makdisi’s approach can be criticized in several respects. First of all, he neglects the Ottoman struggle with the Western powers for influence over the Arab provinces. In his article the Ottomans are represented as the only absolute authority in the region, the Arab people totally disregarded as a factor in the process of modernization. Yet the Ottoman Empire was competing with the Western powers in the Arab provinces and had to persuade its Arab citizens that their state was as progressive as its Western counterparts and prevent them from developing sympathies toward the Western powers. According to Makdisi, the Ottoman Empire was not in a position to mediate between its own “backward” Orient and the civilized West, since the Western civilization was inside the Arab provinces thanks to its educational and religious institutions and, in many cases, these were more influential over the different Arab communities than those of the Ottoman government. As demonstrated by Fawaz and Philipp,⁸⁶ the Ottoman elites became involved in a process of modernization in the Arab lands that had commenced with the opening of Western institutions there, and they tried to cement the loyalty of their citizens against the Western threat of colonization. Secondly, the difference between state formation and colonization is not clear in his text. For example, the author is not clear whether we can classify the creation of modern France within the same ideal type as that of the transformations experienced in India in the direction of modernization under British colonization, or the Ottoman treatment of the Arabs with that of British India and French Africa. I argue that the Ottomans took as a model the Western states’ treatment of their own citizens rather than their conduct in the colonies. Third, it is true that the Ottoman elites regarded some sections of Arab society as “backward.” But that was not unique to the Arabs: Similar remarks by Turkish authors or statesmen can be found regarding Turks who lived in similar conditions. As demonstrated by Abdulhamid Kırmızı in a recent article, non-modern Turks were also thought to be in the same category.⁸⁷ On the other hand, orientalist remarks directed against the nationally spirited, modernized Arabists are found only rarely in the case of Cemal Pasha. Consequently, his struggle with the Arabists was, in a sense, a competition over different ways of “conducting” the Arab population, that is, the Arabist-decentralist way of “conduct” and Cemal’s Ottomanist vision of conduct. Therefore, the “disdain” shown toward the Arab population by the

Turkish rulers was actually a reflection of the modernist perception of non-modern society. Fourth, Makdisi's claim that the empire aimed to transform itself into a Turkish-dominated structure⁸⁸ seems debatable, at least in the case of Cemal's governorate. It is true that Cemal, to a considerable extent, Turkified the Syrian bureaucracy. But he did not apply this method to "civilize" Syria with a colonial mission, but rather to replace Western influence – a higher category in the hierarchy suggested by Makdisi – with that of the Ottomans. Thus the Arab bureaucrats who were thought to be under the influence of the Western powers were not simply dismissed, but appointed to equal posts in Anatolia, that is, assigned to govern those who, according to Makdisi, would have been seen as "the first-class citizens" of the empire. Was it possible for an Indian to be a sub-governor in a British town? This is a question worth considering. Similarly, as demonstrated by Jacobson, "the Ottoman Empire encouraged its provincial subjects to adopt Ottoman citizenship and allowed them to participate in the Ottoman and local political scene."⁸⁹ Fifth, it seems that Makdisi's definition of orientalism differs from that of Edward Said. As suggested by Kayapınar, there is no historical, cultural, ethnic, or geographical basis for defining the "ontological and epistemological" differences of a Turkish orientalism toward the Arabs. In other words, in the eyes of the Turks during the Ottoman times, some parts of Arab society were "backward," like some parts of Turkish society, but these "backwards" societies were also a part of Ottoman society. That is, there was not any necessary differentiation between Turks and Arabs in the eyes of the Ottoman elites.⁹⁰

State formation, Unionist ideology, and the character of Cemal's governance in Syria

Contrary to Makdisi's account, the aims of Cemal's reforms were, first, to abolish the influence of the Great Powers, and, second, to eliminate local particularisms, such as the Arabists, Zionists, and the Christian clergy, which, according to him, had for years prevented the "proper" establishment of the state's authority and the creation of a sense of Ottomanness in Syria. In short, Cemal's activities as governor in Syria were part of the process of the "formation of a modern state" rather than a process of "colonization." Therefore, Foucault's conception of "governmentality" is more useful for understanding the character of Cemal's regime in Syria than Edward Said's theory of "orientalism."

Having examined the transformation of the "mentality of government," or "governmentality,"⁹¹ in the process of the formation of modern states, Foucault concludes that governments changed shape and transformed into a structure that "conducts the conduct" of the population under their rule.⁹² By this, he means to control, "to lead, to direct or to guide" behaviors, actions, and even comportments of the population through the "conduct" of government, employing particular "techniques, forms of knowledge and other

means.” The modern state entails the use of such tools in “any attempt to shape with some degree of deliberation aspects of [people’s] behavior according to particular sets of norms and for a variety of ends.”⁹³ In nation-states and “consolidated states,” as conceptualized by Charles Tilly, those processes work to shape the “conduct” of their citizens. A range of social and economic institutions, such as the school, the factory, the army, and the prison were “designed to observe, monitor, shape and control the behavior of individuals” at the center of the formation process of the modern state.⁹⁴ The state’s actions during its re-formation “to conduct the conduct” of its citizens resulted in the “subjectification” and “subjugation” of its citizens, who were made loyal to the state with patriotic feeling.⁹⁵

Influenced by the Western model of the modern nation-state, the Ottoman authorities, beginning with Mahmud II, who was known as the second founder (*müessis-i sani*) of the Ottoman state, endeavored to remove the local structures that prevented the state from conducting the conduct of its population. However, as noted earlier, this centralization created a new group of local notables in the Arab provinces. Furthermore, other local leaders, such as tribal chiefs and clergy, continued to have influence over “the conduct of conduct” of the Arab peoples until the outbreak of World War I. On the one hand, the intervention and influence of the Western Great Powers prevented the Ottoman state from shaping the conduct of its citizens in the Arab provinces. On the other hand, the emergence of nationalist feelings among the Arabs and the other ethnicities of the empire posed a challenge to the unity of the Ottoman Empire.

As a result of these challenges, the Young Turk movement, of which Cemal Pasha was a prominent member, attributed great importance to the consolidation of the Ottoman state. Even though the founding fathers of this movement, such as Ahmed Rıza and Mizancı Murad, expressed their desire for “liberty” in reaction to Hamidian despotism, their initial concern was to stop the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and to make it as strong as the Western states. As also stated by Mardin, they adopted the ideal of liberty only as a means to keep the different “ethnicities” of the empire united and to make them loyal to the empire. They believed that, quite the reverse of Abdulhamid’s approach, giving more freedom to such groups would eliminate their desire to be separated from the Ottoman state.⁹⁶

Both the founding fathers of the CUP and the leaders of the 1908 Revolution had a positivist worldview and thought that they could “conduct the conduct” of the people in a way analogous to the relationship between patient and physician. If the society is ill, then the rulers treat them. They cast themselves in the role of “social physician” to treat the illnesses of the society.⁹⁷ Because of the people’s indifference toward the CUP in the beginning, they saw the state as the engine of change in society.⁹⁸ Together with this state centrism, Ahmed Rıza Bey and many others adopted a Social Darwinist attitude and believed in the gradual establishment of the people’s loyalty to the empire by way of education. “They believed that their

compatriots, like Darwin's 'Ceylon ducks which had forgotten how to swim' had forgotten their devotion to the homeland." A constant prodding was needed to revive their patriotism.⁹⁹ Cemal himself also had a Social Darwinist perspective. The Spanish consul in Jerusalem stated in his diaries that, during his time as governor of Syria, Cemal gave a lecture on the situation of Turkish women with reference to "Darwinian theories."¹⁰⁰ This Social Darwinist background was determinative to a considerable extent in Cemal's policies in Syria toward the various groups of Syrian society analyzed throughout the chapters of this study.

In the perspective of the founding fathers and the later Unionist leaders, if the Ottomans could adopt an "Ottomanness" that made them loyal to the Ottoman fatherland then the danger of dissolution of the Ottoman state would be eliminated and the Ottoman government would be the only sovereign over their lands.¹⁰¹ However, the indifference of the people to the repeated invitations of the Young Turks to rebel against Abdulhamid led them to call upon army officers for a revolution and to adopt an elitist attitude in their reforms of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, by 1908, the Young Turk movement had evolved from an intellectual enterprise applied to scientific theories to save the state into political activism massively supported by the young officers in the Balkan provinces of the empire.¹⁰² In 1906, Ahmed Rıza, the leader of the CUP, invited the army to provide order (*nizam*) and peace (*asayiş*) in the Ottoman realm to save the state from total dissolution or partitioning by the Great Powers.¹⁰³ In the same vein, the opposition was also a threat to the unity of the Ottoman state. According to Ahmed Rıza, a powerful army was also needed "in order to attach to the body of the state various elements who want to separate themselves from us with the idea of attaining autonomy."¹⁰⁴ After that, the ideas of the CUP began to disseminate among the young officers in the army and those young officers became the leaders the 1908 Revolution, in which Cemal was prominent.

The place of the opposition in the ideology of the CUP is very crucial for understanding Cemal's treatment of the Arabist opposition in Syria. After their ascent to power, they became quite intolerant of the opposition. The loss of a majority of the empire's Balkan provinces between 1908 and 1912 made the leaders of the 1908 Revolution more fanatical against the opposition and every kind of particularism came to be seen by them as a barrier between the state and its population and a threat for the unity of the empire. Since they believed in the necessity of the full conduct of the state over the conduct of its citizens to maintain the Ottoman unity, they saw all opposition activity as "treason to the Ottoman fatherland."¹⁰⁵ In the same way, they never considered the opposition as offering an alternative to their own approach¹⁰⁶ and they never conceived of someone's not being a Unionist as anything other than "unpatriotic."¹⁰⁷ Full control, they believed, would also turn the sympathies of the peoples of the empire from various ethnicities and religions, such as Arabs, Armenians, Jews, and Christians, toward their own state and would give them an Ottoman national identity.¹⁰⁸ Before the 1908 Revolution

and its aftermath, the CUP leaders realized that the leaders of non-Turkish ethno-religious organizations had no desire to accept a wholesale Ottomanism by classifying themselves first and foremost as Ottomans.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, these nationalist oppositions presented a “threat” to Ottoman unity and the shaping of the conduct of the citizenry. Cemal’s suspicion toward the Arabists and other local particularisms stemmed from this conviction.

All of this gives us a picture of the ideal Ottoman citizen envisaged by the CUP leaders and, as a member of its triumvirate, Cemal Pasha. Above all, the ideal Ottoman needed to have a devotion to the Ottoman fatherland and Ottoman identity like the allegiance of the citizens of nation-states to their fatherland and national identity. In a similar way, the ideal Ottomans had to have a strong sense of patriotism. Their Ottoman identity had to be stronger than their “local” national identities. The ideal Ottomans also needed to know that the Great Powers were, indeed, the enemies of the Ottoman Empire and, therefore, could not feel any sympathy toward them. Furthermore, the ideal Ottoman citizen needed to have a desire to save the occupied parts of the Ottoman fatherland, like Egypt, Albania, Tripoli, and Salonika.¹¹⁰

As will be detailed throughout the chapters of this study, Cemal’s governorate in geographical Syria represented an attempt to form a modern state that would “conduct the conduct” of the Ottoman Empire’s Syrian citizens. Cemal Pasha’s governorate in Syria was a struggle with the “barriers” preventing the Ottoman state from controlling, leading, and shaping its “citizens,” as well as an endeavor to produce ideal citizens by way of schools and conscription.

Cemal believed that only the establishment of a special kind of statecraft in Syria could achieve these goals. Consequently, he established a special bureaucracy that consisted mainly of Turks. In the CUP years preceding Cemal’s governorate, the bureaucrats who were appointed to Syria had been chosen from those who knew about the conditions of the region and who had knowledge of Arabic. As will be detailed below, those bureaucrats established good relations with the Syrian notables and other local leaders. Since Cemal thought of these localities as “barriers” to the full “conduct” of the state, he replaced the bureaucrats of the old regime with new ones appropriate to his regime without paying attention their knowledge of the region. Moreover, he probably saw the old bureaucrats who knew about the region as “obstacles” due to their good relations with these local forces. Throughout his governorate, the pasha strove to create a powerful team of high-ranking bureaucrats who would be able to work in harmony with him in Syria. None of his telegrams describing the requirements for bureaucrats who would be appointed to the region to work under him makes any reference to experience working in the Arab provinces. However, the requirements were appropriate to the character of the new regime. In one of his telegrams to Talat about the appointment of *kaymakams* to Salt and Kerak, he explained some characteristics of the bureaucrats needed in Syria:

For one year, there has been no *kaymakam* in Kerak and Salt. In these days, when we strive for the establishment of the authority of the state in a sound [*sağlam*] way, [the question of] the lack of bureaucrats [*memur*] or the arrival of the bad [*fena*] bureaucrats must be solved ... I request that you appoint a powerful official [as the *kaymakam*] to Salt.¹¹¹

As inferred from this telegram, Cemal wanted to redesign the Syrian bureaucracy to strengthen the influence of the Ottoman government and to implement other projects there. To this end, Cemal requires two personal characteristics for bureaucrats being appointed to Syria: might (*iktidar*) and capability. Other requirements were mentioned in another telegram. When he requested the appointment of a new governor for Jerusalem, he wanted the new administrator to be “a Turk; to have a strong, incorruptible sense of morality; to have experience as sub-governor or *kaymakam* ... ; to have a sense of justice ... ; to be brave ... ; to be a member of the Committee of Union and Progress ... ”¹¹²

As can be inferred from this telegram, aside from personal capabilities, Cemal attributed importance to the ethnic origins of these high-ranking bureaucrats. From Cemal's viewpoint, since most of the high-ranking Arab bureaucrats in Syria were either sympathizers or members of the Arabist parties and influenced by the Great Powers, and since they advocated the reorganization of Syria in a decentralized way or did not adopt the ideals of the CUP's vision of “Ottomanness,” they were not reliable bureaucrats for the process of re-forming the state in Syria. In another telegram, he demanded the appointment of the governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Hauran to a place in Anatolia on grounds that he was incapable of solving the government's problems with the Druze community because “he is an Arab before anything else.”¹¹³ In the same way, he requested from Talat the appointment of the (Arab) *kaymakams* of Syria to Anatolian towns.¹¹⁴ Most of his demands to this end were met by the central government for the sake of the strengthening of the state's authority in Syria.¹¹⁵ In spite of his regulations for the appointment of Turks to posts in the Syrian bureaucracy and his Turkist inclinations, it cannot be claimed that Cemal was attempting to Turkify the region as a whole. As will be demonstrated in the first and sixth chapters, Cemal did not undertake any systematic action to remove, transform, or eliminate Arab culture, Arabic, or anything else identified with the Arabs. Rather, he tried to replace Western political influence with Ottoman influence and to spread the necessary ideals for facilitating the Ottoman state's control over Syria. Cemal's insistence on one language, that is, teaching of Turkish, was due to the desire for direct communication between the state and its citizens in Syria, which was deemed necessary in modern states and societies for “coordination” of the population in accordance with the Unionist understanding of the monolithic state.

To better understand the reasons behind Cemal's insistence on the appointment of bureaucrats of Turkish background it is important to analyze

his remarks on Turkishness and Arabness. He explains his ideas on the place of Turkishness and Arabness in the Ottoman Empire in his memoirs:

Speaking of myself, I am primarily an Ottoman, but I do not forget that I am a Turk, and nothing can shake my belief that the Turkish race is the foundation-stone [*temel taş*] of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the sense of civilization and education [*irfan*] strengthens the Ottoman community [*camia*] and fortifies [*te'vid*] the Ottoman Empire, because, the Ottoman Empire is a Turkish creation in its origins.¹¹⁶

If any evidence is required, look at the tragic situation in which we find ourselves to-day. Look at the Arabs, who rose against us in the hope of gaining their independence Where are they to-day? I have referred to this point before ...

Does anyone in those countries ever speak of Ottomanism? On the contrary, the cry "By the grace of God we are freed from Ottomanism," is ever on the lips of a crowd of traitors who have lived on the favour of the Government. But the voice raised in Anatolia – that sacred land to the Turks – proclaims that the "Ottoman Empire" still exists, her noble sons who dwell in Western Thrace – that little Turkish corner – have never ceased to strive for their union with the Empire. In short, all Turks – wherever they are – endeavour to assert themselves and seek refuge in the glorious Ottoman name ...¹¹⁷

These remarks were quoted by Makdisi as proof of the privileging of Turkishness in the Ottoman Empire and the "Turkish responsibility to conduct the affairs of state."¹¹⁸ However, this privilege belonged to the "politically conscious" and "statist" Turkish elite, rather than all Turks. The privileged position of these Turks in the Ottoman Empire stemmed from their allegiance to the ideal of Ottoman unity and their attempts to protect the empire against the Great Powers. In the quoted text, Cemal criticizes the Arab elite for not following the ideal of Ottomanism, similar to his criticism of Sharif Hussein. By "Arab," he means those "who rose against us [the Ottomans] in the hope of gaining their independence," rather than blaming all Arabs. That was the reason for the so-called "disfavorable" treatment of the enlightened Arabs. In sum, there was a certain group of "modernized" Arabs in Cemal's view, but they were not sufficiently loyal to the ideal of Ottoman unity and they could "conduct the conduct" of the common Arabs in a way that ran counter to Cemal's plans. Therefore, the Turks were "preferable" in comparison to the Arabs, and, in the struggle for the reinforcement of Ottoman state authority in Syria, Cemal wanted to employ "enlightened" and "statist" Turks who supported the CUP's ideals in his bureaucracy instead of "untrustworthy Arabs." His activities in Syria should be evaluated in this context. Any increase in one's sense of loyalty to the empire could be measured by his struggle for the preservation of the Ottoman

state. Although Cemal thought himself to be a privileged Turk and regarded Anatolia as his motherland, Cemal's policy in Syria was not one of colonization, but of re-formation of the Ottoman state according to the ideals of the CUP. This would also enable him "to shape the conduct" of the Arabs, making them loyal to the idea of Ottoman unity.¹¹⁹ This is nothing but a strong sense of patriotism, required of the citizens of nation-states, and the process introduced by Cemal Pasha in Syria was the re-formation of a modern state according to the nation-state model. Cemal himself answers the charges of Turkification in his memoirs as follows:

I reply emphatically that our policy was not a "Turkish" policy, but the policy of Ottoman unity. If we had accepted the decentralisation principle, the Committee would, indeed, have had to pursue a "Turkish" policy, for we should have had to demand the same local autonomy for *vilayets* inhabited solely by Turks as for the other provinces. So those who confess themselves "Turks" only are really advocates of "decentralisation," for in effect they are simply following a purely Turkish policy. We, on the other hand, whose policy was Ottoman unity, had accepted as a fundamental principle that the influence of the Central Government on the *vilayets* should not be diminished, though the local administration should be granted the most extensive powers, always provided that the unity of army organisation should not be prejudiced ...

Can it be said that the "Turkification" of the nations was involved in the demand that the Turkish language should be the official tongue in the Ottoman Empire? Were we engaged in the "Turkification" of the other nations when we said that public education in the Ottoman Empire must be under the supervision of the Government and well conducted?¹²⁰

The second paragraph is especially helpful for understanding the character of Cemal's "Turkification" policy. With the partial "Turkification" of the bureaucracy and education in Syria, he did not undertake a transformation process regarding Arab culture. It was rather a part of his policy of re-formation of the state's presence in Syria. When these steps are considered together with his actions to eliminate social intermediaries, such as the Arab notables, Zionists, clergy, etc. the imposition of Turkish can be understood more clearly.

The fact that simply being a Turk was inadequate for bureaucratic appointment in Cemal's Syria is another indication that his regime was based on state-centrism, not Turkification. Those who did not have the qualifications mentioned above could be dismissed regardless of their ethnicity. The governors, sub-governors, or *kaymakams* who could not adapt to Cemal's style of administration either resigned or were dismissed. In the first year of his time in Syria, Cemal changed almost all the governors of the principal administrative units in geographical Syria. At the end of his first year, the governors of Beirut, Damascus, Lebanon, and Aleppo had all been replaced.

He dismissed the governor of Beirut, Bekir Sami Bey, accusing him of extortion¹²¹ (*irtikab*) and gambling (*bahis*) with the bank managers.¹²² As can be inferred from the memoirs of Salim Ali Salaam, Bekir Sami had established close relations with the Arabists of Beirut.¹²³ The governors of Aleppo and Damascus changed their places of duty since they were not attuned to Cemal's way of administration. According to Ahmed Rasim, who was appointed as the reporter of the *Tasvir-i Efkâr* newspaper in Syria at the beginning of the war, Cemal Pasha did not approve of governor general Hulusi Bey's loose policy of Arabism and hesitated to leave the administration of Syria to Hulusi when he departed for the first expedition against Egypt in the beginning of 1915. Again, Ahmed Rasim states that Hulusi, too, disapproved of Cemal's policies toward the Arabists.¹²⁴ Similarly, Ranzi, the Austrian consul in Damascus, reported that Hulusi Bey resigned from his post due to his disapproval of the boundless rigor applied by Cemal Pasha.¹²⁵ Kurd Ali states that Hulusi Bey spoke the local dialect of Syria very well and had good relations with the local people and notables.¹²⁶ Celal Bey, the governor of Aleppo, also had good relations with the Arab notables of the city.¹²⁷ Macid Bey, the governor of Jerusalem, was dismissed for similar reasons. According to the diaries of the Spanish consul of Jerusalem, he had a conflict with the commander of Jaffa, Hasan Bey, who was favored by Cemal, and therefore resigned. When "he had tendered his resignation, which produced a real panic in the city" the Spanish consul visited the other consuls and "all telegraphed Constantinople asking that his resignation not be accepted. Even the four Patriarchs (the Latin, the Greek, the Armenian and the Coptic) sent a message too."¹²⁸ As can be inferred from this quotation, Macid Bey had good relations with local interest groups and foreign consuls, two "barriers" to the establishment of direct state control in the realm in the eyes of Cemal. The situation of Zeki Bey, the military commander of Jerusalem, was no different from that of Macid. Jacobson concludes that Zeki was removed from his post "probably because of his popularity and good reputation among the local population in the city, and because of the general antinational policy that Cemal Pasha began to implement in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon."¹²⁹ In addition, his relations with the consuls serving in Jerusalem were good.¹³⁰ The situation of the mayor of Jerusalem was similar to those of its governor and commander. Since he was from the Husayni family, an important family among the Arab political and social elite of the city, Cemal dismissed him from his post.¹³¹

When the central government appointed a bureaucrat who fell short of Cemal's stipulations, he was usually able to secure the bureaucrat's dismissal. The most outstanding example of this was the appointment of a new governor to Syria following Hulusi Bey. Cemal suggested the governor of Erzurum, Tahsin Bey, as Hulusi's successor as the central governor.¹³² However, the central government appointed Azmi Bey (not Azmi Bey of Beirut) to Syria. Upon the complaint of Cemal, claiming that Azmi was not sufficiently experienced or powerful to administer the province of Syria, he had to resign

from his post.¹³³ Afterwards, Talat appointed Ahmet Faik Bey, with whom he had close relations, to the Syrian governorate. But he, too, also had to return to İstanbul.¹³⁴

The characteristics of the high-ranking bureaucrats appointed by Cemal demonstrate his intentions regarding Syria. The case of Azmi Bey, appointed as the governor of Beirut upon Cemal's request, is a good example of his ideal bureaucrat. When Azmi Bey resigned from his office in June 1918, the German consul in Beirut described him as "extremely strong headed" toward the representatives of foreign states, "relentless" and "chauvinist" against all these representatives, including the allies of Turkey. However, the consul states, Azmi worked with tireless energy during his time as governor.¹³⁵

As will be analyzed below, Cemal saw Syria as a semi-colonized part of the empire that had to be cleansed of foreign influence and reintegrated into the body of the Ottoman state. With his changes to the Syrian bureaucracy and the appointment of powerful bureaucrats, Cemal wanted to amend the weak image of the Ottoman government among Syrians and set his seal on Syria as its founder in the modern sense. He opened schools and had streets¹³⁶ and fountains there built in his name; people hung Cemal's photos with his signature in the most conspicuous places in their houses as a symbol of their loyalty to the leader of their country;¹³⁷ when he was going to Friday prayers he organized *selamlık* ceremonies, which were in fact unique to the Ottoman sultan; the most conspicuous places in the Syrian provincial capitals, such as Damascus, Jerusalem, and Aleppo, were reserved as his headquarters.¹³⁸ To conclude, as part of his Unionist ideology, attributing importance to the strength of the state, Cemal wanted to remove the weak image of the Ottoman government with his authoritarian personality and did not hesitate to demonstrate the strength of the state to Syrians. Second, through his policies toward different components of Syrian society, Cemal wanted to increase the sense of Ottomanness among Syrians.

A review of the literature and sources and outline of the study

This study sets out to elucidate the aims of Cemal Pasha's appointment to Syria as military commander and governor general. The transformations in the "governmentality" of Ottoman rule in Syria caused by his policies throughout the war period will be within the scope of the present study. This study relies on primary as well as secondary sources. Documents from the Ottoman Archives (BOA) have been of primary importance for the subject under study. The availability of many telegrams and reports from Cemal and his subordinates enabled the author of the present study to analyze the ideas of the actors of this period on the subject matter. However, the writers of these documents could sometimes hide the facts in an attempt to avoid showing that they had been unsuccessful in overcoming various problems. Reference to German and Austrian consular reports minimized this problem. Another archive that contains Ottoman documents is that of the Turkish

General Staff (ATASE Arşivi), which includes the documents of the Ottoman War Ministry. This archive contains very valuable documents covering Cemal's era as commander of the 4th Army in Syria. Unfortunately, the documents in this archive are not completely open to scholars. The officials employed in the archives survey the documents and select those they consider relevant according to the subjects specified by the researchers. In addition, there are special document collections in the archives of the Turkish History Association (Türk Tarih Kurumu, TTK Arşivi). The papers of Kazım Orbay, the aide-de-camp of Enver Pasha, Enver Pasha, the vice commander-in-chief of the Ottoman armies on behalf of the sultan, and some of the papers of Enver himself are in this archive and open to all scholars. Many samples of correspondence between Enver and Cemal regarding the political and military situation in Syria can be found there.

The archives of European states include valuable files regarding Cemal Pasha's governorate in Syria. Since it was a period of war, the reports of German and Austrian officials, as the allies of the Ottoman Empire, are the most valuable among these. Many times they reflected the local conditions better than the Ottoman documents, since they were not responsible for governing the region. In particular, the close relations between some German and Turkish officials make the information in the German documents (PA-AA, BA-MA) valuable for understanding the background of particular events. Much the same can be said for the Austrian Archives (HHStA). Since there was no British or French representative in Syria because of the hostilities between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied states, the archives of these states (TNA, MAEE, SHD) are of less importance. Indeed, there is much inaccurate information in those archives regarding Syria. However, the remarks of some Arab deserters and intelligence reports can be used for the war period. In this study, the documents of the Entente states have been used after checking them with the Ottoman, German, and Austrian documents as much as possible.

The period is also rich in terms of memoirs and diaries in Turkish, Arabic, German, and English. In this sense, the availability of Cemal's own memoirs is of capital importance, as are accounts from members of his immediate entourage. In his memoirs, Cemal touches on many subjects examined in the present study and makes his own claims about them. However, he is, understandably, considerably apologetic in his assessments and does not deal with any subject that would tarnish his name. For example, he never mentions his actions against the Zionist movement, presumably to avoid difficulties in the international political arena given the strength of the Zionists in shaping international politics. Obviously, for Cemal, international circumstances were to have a big influence in determining the new leader of Turkey, a position he had greatly aspired to. Similarly, his account of the nature of his policy toward the Druze is only included in the Turkish version of his memoirs, probably to give an answer to critics of his policy in Syria among the Turks. Cemal's memoirs will be critically evaluated in detail in this study.

Aside from Cemal Pasha himself, figures from his immediate circle also left valuable accounts of the events and policies covered by this study. In Turkish, first mention must be made of the memoirs of Ali Fuad Erden, the chief of staff of Cemal's army in Syria. He is extremely objective in his evaluation of Cemal's activities. He does not hesitate to criticize Cemal when necessary. For example, in the case of the execution of Arab notables, he accused his commander of disregarding the law and of hanging innocent Arabs.¹³⁹ Similarly, he frankly explained the failure of the Ottoman army in the first expedition against Egypt.¹⁴⁰ However, the memoirs are contradictory regarding the aims of that expedition. In the beginning of his memoirs, Erden claims that the aim of the expedition was to hold the British troops at the Suez Canal and in Egypt.¹⁴¹ But, throughout the book, he includes numerous documents demonstrating that Cemal actually planned an operation to conquer Egypt.¹⁴² In addition, the memoirs include valuable information on Cemal's other activities in Syria, such as public works,¹⁴³ the struggle with epidemics,¹⁴⁴ and the Armenian question.¹⁴⁵

Another crucial account has been provided by Von Kress, the German Commander of the troops in the Sinai Desert, who made the preparations for the second expedition against Egypt. The book is a good account of all the operations involving the Suez Canal, from the first expedition against Egypt to the capture of Palestine by the British. Von Kress also provides significant details regarding daily life in Syria during World War I. For example, he vividly narrates the excitement of the Palestinians when the Sacred Flag of the Prophet Muhammad (Sancak-ı Şerif) was brought to motivate the people and soldiers in the Canal Expedition.¹⁴⁶ His observations regarding the impact of the locust plague,¹⁴⁷ famine,¹⁴⁸ and epidemics¹⁴⁹ experienced in this time, as well as provisioning conditions, are also valuable for understanding the difficulties of daily life in Syria.

The book *Zeytindağı* by Falih Rıfkı is another important source. The book was written in the Republican period and reflects the orientalist prejudices of the Republican elites toward the Arabs. An orientalist approach to Arabs in the sense that was portrayed by Makdisi can, indeed, be found in this book. Although it is a literary work and distorts the events he witnessed, Falih Rıfkı's opinions put forward in the text have deeply influenced Turkish perception of Arabs until the present day. The Ottoman background of the Arab countries was neglected in the book and, in accordance with the Republican ideology, the Arabs were described as alien to the Turks. He depicted Beirut as "a hundred times more alien than Dobruca."¹⁵⁰

In addition, some of the Arabs in Cemal's immediate circle also wrote their own memoirs. In this regard, Shakib Arslan and Muhammad Kurd Ali should be mentioned in the first place because of their closeness to Cemal during his time as governor. Shakib Arslan makes important assessments of the character of Cemal Pasha's regime and dedicates a large place in his memoirs to harshly criticizing Cemal's policy of execution and exile toward Arabists. Shakib accuses Cemal of planting seeds of hatred between the Turks

and the Arabs, as the one who set his heart on the ideal of the Ottoman unity and who was an opponent of the Arabist movement.¹⁵¹ In spite of his Arabist tendency, Kurd Ali's memoirs avoid becoming engulfed in the Arab nationalist narrative that emerged following the Ottoman era. He evaluates Cemal's governorate in a broader perspective. As a journalist, he provides valuable details about the propaganda policy of Cemal by way of the press in competition with the Germans¹⁵² as well as the plans of the Arabists upon the outbreak of the war.¹⁵³ Close relations between the CUP and the Arabists are also indicated by Kurd Ali. For example, he describes Talat Pasha's appreciation of Abd al-Wahhab al-Inglizi's service to the Ottoman state, as well as Talat's efforts to help him go abroad to save him from the wrath of Cemal.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, Kurd Ali skillfully describes Cemal Pasha's aversion to any kind of foreign influence in Syria – especially that of the Germans.¹⁵⁵

Apart from these, a considerable number of memoirs published by prominent Arabists included evaluations of Cemal's rule in Syria. However, these sources were widely influenced by the nationalist atmosphere of the post-war period, and their discussion of Cemal's governorate is subsumed by their nationalist narrative. According to the claims of this narrative, Cemal's persecution of Arabists reflected the Arabs' will for independence and the maturation of Arab nationalist feelings. Cemal's atrocities could not prevent this process and, following the executions, the Arab Revolt broke out.¹⁵⁶ For example, Faris al-Khoury and Amin Said claim in their memoirs that Faysal escaped from Damascus upon the beginning of the executions and launched the "Great Arab revolts" with his father in response.¹⁵⁷ Another problem of these memoirs is that they restrict their descriptions regarding the war period largely to Cemal's executions at the expense of other disastrous incidents, such as famine, epidemics, and battles. Since they were written in the mandate period, the authors of these memoirs used their narratives to legitimize the place of the Arab nationalist movement in the post-war period.

Finally, diaries written during the war period can be mentioned as another primary source for the present study. In this regard, the diaries of Ihsan Turjman, a common soldier in Cemal's army in Jerusalem, and the diaries of Conde de Ballobar, the Spanish consul in Jerusalem, deserve special attention for understanding Cemal's regime in Syria. Ihsan Turjman's diaries are important because they shed light on the life of the general population and their feelings toward the Ottoman Empire and Cemal Pasha's policies. The transformations in daily life caused by the Ottoman entrance into the war and their impact on the attitudes of the population toward the Ottoman government are explored throughout the diaries.¹⁵⁸ Since it was a contemporary account, it is possible, at least to some extent, to get a sense of the society's real attitudes. Similar information can be found in the diaries of Ballobar. In addition, his diaries are useful for observing the transformation of the Ottoman government's treatment of foreign consuls. Furthermore, the diaries show Ottomans' sensitivity in regard to their independence and their efforts to remove foreign influence from the Ottoman realm, as well as the

resistance of the old bureaucrats to the new policies of Cemal Pasha. For example, the governor of Jerusalem asked Ballobar to appeal to the Spanish ambassador in İstanbul to lobby the Ottoman government for the dismissal of the *kaymakam* of Jaffa.

Chapter 1 of the present study examines the primary purpose of Cemal's presence in Syria, which was the maintenance of "peace and internal order in Syria."¹⁶⁰ In relation to this, it investigates the meaning of "peace" and "order" with reference to Cemal's struggle to eliminate the Arabist movement. The present study focuses on the changing direction of Ottoman policies toward the Arabists with Cemal's governorship in Syria. Cemal saw the Arabist notables of Syria as a barrier preventing Syrians from becoming ideal citizens of the empire, and implemented a rule of terror to abolish this movement in Syria. In this way, the Syrians could be controlled or guided by the Ottoman state. Another method used by Cemal to fight Arabism was pan-Islamist propaganda. He represented the Arabists as enemies of Muslim unity. To this end, he published a newspaper called *al-Sharq* in Damascus. Toward the end of the war, the deteriorating conditions in the empire obliged him to moderate this policy under the pressure of the central Ottoman government. Peace negotiations to put an end to the sharif's revolt can be evaluated in the same context. With this course of action, Cemal and his successors planned to forestall any shift of sympathy among the Syrians toward the sharif. Quite the reverse of what is claimed in the existing literature,¹⁶¹ the correspondence with the sharif shows that the latter sincerely wanted a peace agreement with the CUP. But, playing for time, the Ottoman government delayed an agreement. The unexpected end of Ottoman rule in Syria brought closure to this negotiation process. As a final remark, I maintain that Cemal's struggle with Arabism was a result of his political aims, rather than any fear of a military threat.

Another aspect of Cemal's project of establishing the Ottoman state's control over the Syrians consisted of measures directed against various autonomous groups, such as the Zionists, the government of Lebanon, and the Christian clergy. Chapter 2 analyzes Cemal's struggle with these intermediaries between the government and the people over who would "conduct the conduct" of the Syrians. As part of this policy, he attempted to restrict the authority of the Zionist movement over the Jewish population of Palestine. First, he naturalized non-Ottoman Jews to broaden Ottoman state authority over them and then he disarmed the Jewish colonists. Second, he exiled or deported the Zionist leaders from Palestine to improve the integration of the Jews with the state. Although the history of Zionism has been analyzed in every detail, Cemal's policy toward Zionism has not attracted scholars' attention. A notable exception is Fuat Dündar, who touches upon Cemal's policies, claiming that his expulsion of Jews represented an attempt to engineer ethnicity.¹⁶² This position, however, disregards the broadening authority of the state

over its Jewish citizens with the outbreak of the war. In addition to his clash with Zionism, Cemal also focused his attention on the autonomy of the Christian clergy and the autonomous government of Lebanon. He managed to assert Ottoman state authority over these local forces. The Maronite, Greek Orthodox, and Greek Catholic clergy lost their autonomy and were put under the authority of the Ottoman sultan. Similarly, all the autonomous institutions of the Lebanese government were either removed or brought under the control of the central government through Cemal Pasha's intervention.

While Cemal governed Syria, he had to deal with the resettlement of an enormous number of Armenians deported from Anatolia. Chapter 3 focuses on the integration of the Armenian deportees into the Syrian society in connection with Cemal's general policy toward the various peoples of Syria. This study analyzes Cemal Pasha's policies regarding deportation and resettlement, connecting them with his general policy of re-forming the state in Syria. As will be detailed in Chapter 3, Cemal's aim in Syria was neither to destroy the Armenian race or culture nor to create an ethnic balance to the Arabs. Instead, he dispersed them through Syria to make them a "harmless minority" (*zararsız cüziyet*) and, in this sense, engaged in ethnic engineering. In addition, the pasha tried to do his best, both during the deportations and in their aftermath, to protect the Armenian deportees. To save them from the policy of deliberate negligence by the radical wing of the central government, Cemal pretended to force them to change their religion and established a special committee for the resettlement of mainly "converted" Armenians. He also opened orphanages for Armenian children. Both consular reports and the accounts of the Armenians themselves indicate that all of these activities were measures to protect them against the policies of the radical group within the CUP. In this way, Cemal mainly intended to "transform the dangerous Armenian multitude [*külliyet*] into harmless minority [*cüziyet*]"¹⁶³ In other words, to make them ideal citizens who would not have any political aspiration to separate from the Ottoman Empire in the future.

In addition to internal threats to the expansion of state authority in Syria, Cemal struggled for the abolition of foreign, and particularly French, influence there, which had become quite significant in Syria over the years thanks to the French-backed educational and religious institutions that made Ottoman authority seem weak in the eyes of its citizens and prevented the Ottoman state from shaping the "behaviours, actions and even comportments" of its citizens.¹⁶⁴ This issue is analyzed in Chapter 4. In this regard, Cemal first launched a process of deportation against influential French and Francophile religious and educational men from Syria, on the grounds that they were spreading French influence there. After that, he either closed or tried to Ottomanize their institutions. Cemal also prevented the replacement of French influence in Syria with that of any other state, including those allied to the Ottoman Empire. Thus, he harshly reacted to any attempt by foreign consuls to intervene in the internal affairs of the state and sought to block any cultural propaganda from such states, above all Austria and Germany.

In accordance with the policy of eliminating internal and foreign “barriers” between the state and its citizens, Cemal Pasha implemented a policy toward the Syrians to turn them into ideal Ottoman citizens and a policy of modernizing Syrian cities to make them more accessible to the state and increase the prestige of the Ottoman state in the eyes of the Syrians. Chapter 5 examines Cemal’s pursuit of an ideal citizenry in Syria. In this process, Syrians were conscripted in order to be disciplined both mentally and physically. Their alienation from military life and loss of motivation after the first expedition to Egypt caused an increase in the number of desertions, and recruitment became a nightmare for Syrians throughout the war years. As a second part of his project, Cemal opened schools in Syria aimed at creating modern Ottoman Syrians. The absolute ruler of Syria did not neglect to transform cities in a way that would facilitate the penetration of the state. As part of these modernization projects, the pasha restored historical artifacts from the Byzantine, Umayyad, and Ottoman periods. It is important to mention here that he did not follow a Turkist policy in these restorations and that he renovated Arab monuments as well as the Ottoman ones.

Chapter 6 studies Cemal’s policy toward the tribal groups and nomads of Syria during his time as governor. Unlike his policies toward Syria’s urban population, Cemal maintained the traditional Ottoman policy and gave freedom of action to these groups in return for their loyalty. This policy stood in stark contrast to the policies followed by his predecessors, who aimed at settling these groups in order to bind them to the government.¹⁶⁵ Since it was a period of war, Cemal avoided any action that would frustrate those groups and applied a policy of balance toward them. Thus, for example, he gave a large degree of autonomy to the Druze and made them free from much responsibility to the government. Although not as much as that of the Druze, the Bedouin groups also enjoyed a certain amount of freedom and were not exposed to attempts to subjugate them to the state authority. This policy was due to competition with Great Britain for the allegiance of those groups and Cemal was largely successful in securing their loyalties until the last moment. Especially after the outbreak of the sharifian revolt in Mecca and the advance of the sharif’s troops toward Akaba, this competition heated up and the freedom provided to these groups increased. As a result, none of the Druze supported the sharif or the British and a considerable number of Bedouins remained loyal to Ottoman authority until the end of Ottoman rule in Syria.

Throughout the war, one of Cemal’s greatest “enemies,” both militarily and as an impediment to the implementation of reforms, was famine and its consequences across the whole Syrian territory. The ways in which Cemal struggled to cope with the famine and its consequences are dealt with in Chapter 7. The mutual responsibility of both sides – the British and the Ottoman – for the famine in Syria has been persuasively demonstrated by Linda Schatkowski Schilcher, as have Cemal’s attempts to forestall the famine in Syria.¹⁶⁶ Broadly speaking, the Ottoman requisitioning of agricultural

products and the conscription of agricultural laborers for the army were the Ottoman activities that contributed to the famine. The Entente's blockade of the Syrian coasts prevented foreign assistance from neutral states from reaching Syria. Furthermore, Schilcher suggests that famine was not a disaster unique to Lebanon, but affected the whole Syrian realm. Thus, Schilcher Proves that Cemal did not deliberately starve the Lebanese because of their sympathies with France. Agreeing with Schilcher's study, the present study also touches upon the reasons for the famine and measures taken by Cemal to address it with further reference to the Ottoman, German, and Austrian sources. On the other hand, the famine had a considerable social impact on the Syrian realm. The increasing needs of the army for provisioning and the decreasing quantities of grain in Syria paved the way for the intensification of state pressure over the farmers. These kinds of actions both reduced agricultural production and increased the Syrians' frustration with the Ottoman state. The struggle with famine also shows the changing nature of the state in Syria under Cemal. For example, some high-ranking officials appointed by Cemal strongly opposed foreign assistance on grounds that it would make the state appear weak in the eyes of its citizens. Furthermore, the struggle with epidemics indicates Cemal's new policy based on the state's control over the bodies of its citizens.

The capture of Baghdad by British troops signified the beginning of the end for Cemal. The Ottoman and German headquarters made a plan to combine the Ottoman troops in Syria and Iraq under a German commander. As will be detailed in Chapter 8, General Falkenhayn was appointed for this job and Cemal was disempowered militarily. Following the Ottoman victories in the first and second battles of Gaza, while the Ottomans were preoccupied with the change of the general command in Syria, the British completed their preparations for a third attack against Gaza, which was considered the gate of Jerusalem. As a result, Jerusalem was captured by British troops, on December 10, 1917, and ten days later Cemal resigned from his post because of his disagreement with Falkenhayn. Thus a crucial period in the history of Syria was closed. Cemal accuses Falkenhayn, and implicitly Enver, of being responsible for the loss of Jerusalem in his memoirs:

For myself, I maintain that if (1) the idea of recovering Bagdad [*sic*] had never been mooted and all available troops had been concentrated on the Palestine front, (2) von Falkenhayn had not been put in command of the army in Palestine, we could have held the Gaza-Beersheba [*sic*] line for years, and on the day of the armistice Syria and Palestine would still have formed part of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶⁷

Indeed, an examination of the contemporary documents shows that this failure of the Ottoman troops, to a large extent, emanated from Enver's insistence on an offensive operation to recapture Baghdad instead of defending Palestine with the troops in the hands of the Ottomans.

Notes

- 1 Djemal Pasha, *Memories of A Turkish Statesman, 1913–1919*, New York: George H. Doran Company, 1922, p. 138; Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat 1913–1922*, Dersaadet, 1922, p. 112.
- 2 For a recent study on the abolition of the capitulations, see: Muhammet Emin Küllink, *Kapitülasyonların Kaldırılması*, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2011.
- 3 For a description of this process, see: Kazım Karabekir, *I. Dünya Savaşı Anıları*, İstanbul: Yapı-Kredi Yayınları, 2011, pp. 52–57.
- 4 For a detailed analysis of the Ottoman quest for an alliance in Europe, see: Mustafa Aksakal, *Ottoman Road to War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 93–118. For another study on the Ottoman–German alliance and Enver Pasha’s role in this event, see: Mustafa Çolak, *Enver Paşa Osmanlı-Alman İttifakı*, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2008.
- 5 Aksakal, *Ottoman Road*, p. 183.
- 6 Aksakal, *ibid.*, p. 19.
- 7 For an analysis of Germany’s policy of causing a rebellion in Egypt using Jihad propaganda, see: Salvador Oberhaus, “Zum wilden Aufstande entfammen”: *Die deutsche Propagandastrategie für den Orient im Ersten Weltkrieg am Beispiel Ägypten*, Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2007. For a comparison of the British and the German policies on Egypt, see: Donald M. McKale, *War by Revolution: Germany and Great Britain in the Middle East in the Era of World War I*, Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1998.
- 8 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 138; Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 112.
- 9 BOA, DH.EUM 5.Şb 3/23, Cemal to vali of Syria, 27 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (10 November 1914).
- 10 For the opposition telegrams of the Valis see: BOA, DH.EUM 5.Şb 3/23, Hulusi to Talat, Damascus, 27 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (10 November 1914); Bekir Sami to Talat, Beirut, 26 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (9 November 1914); Celal to Talat, Aleppo, 26 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (9 November 1914).
- 11 ATASE Arşivi, Kls. 4130, Ds. H-1, Fih. 1–84, Cemal to Enver, 18 November 1914, in *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi: Sina-Filistin Cephesi*, Vol. IV, Part I, Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1979, p. 135.
- 12 Muhittin Birgen, *İttihat ve Terakki’de On Sene*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2006, p. 223.
- 13 BA-MA, RM 5/2321, Humann to the Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, “Eindrücke in Syrien,” Constantinople, 30 January 1917.
- 14 Ali Fuad Erden, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı’nda Suriye Hatıraları*, İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2006, p. 107.
- 15 Charles Tilly, “How Empires End,” in Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen (eds.), *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building: The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg Empires*, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997, p. 3.
- 16 M. Şükrü Hanioglu, “Cemal Paşa,” *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 7, 1993, p. 305; in his biography in the *Nevsal-i Milli* journal, the birthplace of Cemal was wrongly written as İstanbul. See: *Nevsal-i Milli*, “Miralay Cemal Bey,” 1330 (1914), 1. Sene, p. 288.
- 17 Hanioglu, “Cemal Paşa,” p. 305.
- 18 Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasi Partiler I*, İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1988, pp. 53–54.
- 19 Nevzat Artuç, *Cemal Paşa: Askeri ve Siyasi Hayatı*, Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2008, p. 10.
- 20 Artuç, *ibid.*, p. 20.
- 21 Kazım Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2009, p. 88.

- 22 Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler III*, p. 412.
- 23 For some studies on the 1908 Revolution, see: M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001; Aykut Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995; Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*; Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler III*.
- 24 Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, Vol. III, Part I, Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 1991, pp. 68–69.
- 25 Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, pp. 53–54; Hanioglu, “Cemal Paşa,” p. 305.
- 26 Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, p. 54.
- 27 *Nevsal-i Milli*, p. 288.
- 28 *Nevsal-i Milli*, p. 288.
- 29 Ziya Şakir, *Paşalar: Enver Talat Cemal*, İstanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları, 2010, p. 173; Abdullah Cevdet, “Nafia Nazırı Cemal Paşa Hazretleriyle Mülakat,” *İctihad*, 15 Şubat 1914 (28 February 1914), No. 93, p. 2,077.
- 30 Yahya Kemal, *Siyasi ve Edebi Portreler*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2006, p. 107.
- 31 Abdullah Cevdet, “Nafia Nazırı Cemal Paşa Hazretleriyle Mülakat,” p. 2,077.
- 32 BOA, DH.MKT, 2892/34, Ministry of Interior to Cemal, 22 Temmuz 1325 (4 August 1909).
- 33 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 25 August 1909.
- 34 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 13 October 1909.
- 35 BOA, DH.MKT, 2914/1, Cemal to Ministry of Interior, Adana, 11 Ağustos 1325 (24 August 1909).
- 36 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 1 September 1909.
- 37 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 25 August 1909.
- 38 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 25 August 1909.
- 39 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 22 September 1909.
- 40 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 10 November 1909.
- 41 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 27 October 1909.
- 42 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 16 December 1909.
- 43 TNA, FO 195/2307, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 13 December 1909.
- 44 TNA, FO 371/998, Lowther to Grey (transmitting the vice-consul in Adana), 7 February 1910.
- 45 TNA, FO 371/998, Lowther to Grey (transmitting the vice-consul in Adana), 23 February 1910.
- 46 TNA, FO 195/2337, British vice-consulate to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 27 August 1910.
- 47 Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, pp. 86–89.
- 48 Artuç, *ibid.*, p. 90.
- 49 TNA, FO 195/2369, the British Consul to FO, Baghdad, 26 September 1911.
- 50 TNA, FO 195/2369, the British Consul to FO, Baghdad, 16 October 1911.
- 51 TNA, FO 195/2369, the British Consul to FO, Baghdad, 16 October 1911.
- 52 TNA, FO 195/2369, the British Consul to FO, Baghdad, 16 October 1911.
- 53 TNA, FO 195/2369, the British Consul to FO, Baghdad, 16 October 1911.

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- 54 Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, p. 94.
- 55 BOA, HR.SYS, 91/4, Cemal to the Foreign Ministry, Baghdad, 17 Nisan 1328 (30 April 1912) in Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, p. 94.
- 56 BOA, HR.SYS, 91/4, Cemal to the Foreign Ministry, Baghdad, 7 Mayıs 1328 (20 May 1912) in Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, p. 94.
- 57 Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, p. 95.
- 58 BOA, BEO 4015/301052, Sadaret to Ministry of Interior, 29 Şubat 1327 (13 March 1912).
- 59 BOA, DH.MTV 18/47, Müftüzade Muhammed Kamil Bey to Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, 22 Temmuz 1912 (3 August 1912).
- 60 TNA, FO 195/2369, the British consul to FO, Baghdad, 16 October 1911.
- 61 TNA, FO 195/2369, the British consul to FO, Baghdad, 16 October 1911.
- 62 Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, p. 98.
- 63 Artuç, *ibid.*, pp. 99–103.
- 64 Artuç, *ibid.*, p. 110.
- 65 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 16.
- 66 Djemal Pasha, *ibid.*, p. 17.
- 67 Djemal Pasha, *ibid.*, p. 17.
- 68 Djemal Pasha, *ibid.*, p. 17–18.
- 69 For detailed information about these projects, see: Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, pp. 134–38, 146.
- 70 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 58.
- 71 Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine 1840–1861*, London: Oxford University Press, 1968, p. v.
- 72 Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in Albert Hourani, Philip S. Khoury, and Mary C. Wilson (eds.), *The Modern Middle East*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, pp. 94–95.
- 73 Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- 74 Jens Hanssen, "Practices of Integration: Center–Periphery Relations in the Ottoman Empire," in Jens Hanssen, Thomas Philipp, and Stefan Weber (eds.), *The Empire in the City: Arab Provincial Capitals in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Beirut: Orient-Institut der DMG Beirut, 2002, p. 74; for another study on the central role of the Damascus Council, which consisted of the local notables, in the public life of the province, see: Elisabeth Thompson, "Ottoman Political Reform in the Provinces: Damascus Advisory Council in 1844–45," *IJMES*, Vol. 25, 1993, pp. 457–475.
- 75 Leila Fawaz, "Foreign Presence and the Perception of the Ottoman Rule in Beirut," in Jens Hanssen, Thomas Philipp, Stefan Weber (eds.), *The Empire in the City: Arab Provincial Capitals in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Beirut: Orient-Institut der DMG Beirut, 2002, p. 93; for another study on the Ottoman–European competition in Acre with similar arguments, see: Thomas Philipp, "Acre, The First Instance of Changing Times," in Jens Hanssen, Thomas Philipp, Stefan Weber (eds.), *The Empire in the City: Arab Provincial Capitals in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Beirut: Orient-Institut der DMG Beirut, 2002, pp. 77–92.
- 76 Abigail Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire: Jerusalem Between Ottoman and British Rule*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011, pp. 22–52.
- 77 Adil Baktiaya, *Osmanlı Suriyesi'nde Arapçılığın Doğuşu*, İstanbul: Bengi Kitabevi, 2009, p. 109.
- 78 Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and the Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire*, Berkeley: California University Press, 1997.
- 79 Kayalı, *ibid.*, p. 210.
- 80 Kayalı, *ibid.*, p. 209.
- 81 For the related chapter in the book, see: Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, pp. 208–245.

- 82 Artuç, *ibid.*, p. xli.
- 83 Ussama Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 3, June 2002, p. 768; similar evaluations can be found in Selim Deringil's studies on the tribal Arabs: Selim Deringil, "'They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery': The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 45, No. 2, April 2003, pp. 311–342.
- 84 Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," p. 769.
- 85 Makdisi, *ibid.*, p. 770.
- 86 Fawaz, "Foreign Presence," p. 93; Philipp, "Acre," pp. 77–92.
- 87 Abdulhamit Kırmızı, "Going Round the Province for Progress and Prosperity: Inspection Tours and Reports of Late Ottoman Governors," *Studies in Travel Writing*, Vol. 16, No. 4, 2012, pp. 387–401.
- 88 Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," p. 795.
- 89 Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, p. 13.
- 90 M. Akif Kayapınar, "Ussama Makdisi ve Osmanlı Oryantalizmi," *Divan*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2006, pp. 311–17.
- 91 For an analysis of the term "governmentality" by Foucault himself, see: Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 87–104.
- 92 Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, London: Palgrave, 2007, pp. 192–193.
- 93 Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, London: Sage, 2010, pp. 17–18.
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- 95 Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann, and Thomas Lemke, "From Foucault's Lecture at the Collège de France to Studies of Governmentality: An Introduction," in Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann, and Thomas Lemke (eds.), *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges*, New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 1.
- 96 Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008, p. 305.
- 97 Mardin, *ibid.*, p. 20.
- 98 Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2010, p. 117.
- 99 Hanioglu, *Preparation*, p. 289.
- 100 Conde de Ballobar, *Jerusalem in World War I: The Palestine Diary of a European Diplomat*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2011, p. 66.
- 101 The definition of Ottoman identity in the *khutbas* of Tunalı Hilmi Bey is a good example of the Young Turks' Ottomanism. For an analysis of Hilmi's understanding of Ottomanism, see: Sabri Ateş, *Tunalı Hilmi Bey: Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Bir Aydın*, İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2009, pp. 126–140.
- 102 Hanioglu, *Preparation*, p. 289.
- 103 Ahmed Rıza, *Vazife ve Mes'uliyet İkinci Cüz: Asker*, Egypt, 1322 (1906); for the transcription of the text, see: Mustafa Gündüz and Musa Bardak, *Eğitimci Bir Jön Türk Lider: Ahmet Rıza Bey ve "Vazife ve Mesuliyet" Eserleri*, İstanbul: Divan Kitap, 2011, pp. 61–113.
- 104 Ahmed Rıza, *ibid.*, p. 2, quoted in Hanioglu, *Preparation*, p. 300.
- 105 Tank Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler III*, İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1989, p. 10.
- 106 Tunaya, *ibid.*, p. 35.
- 107 Tunaya, *ibid.*, p. 30.

- 108 For the definition of the Ottoman nation by a CUP pamphlet, see: Hanioglu, *Preparation*, pp. 301–302.
- 109 Hanioglu, *Preparation*, p. 301.
- 110 For a description of the ideal Ottoman citizen with reference to Ottoman school books, see: Mehmet Ö. Alkan, “II. Meşrutiyet’te Eğitim, İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti, Milliyetçilik, Militarizm veya ‘Militar’ Türk-İslam Sentezi”, in Ferda Ergut (ed.), *II. Meşrutiyet’i Yeniden Düşünmek*, İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2009, pp. 57–85.
- 111 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 507/83, Cemal to Talat, 19 Kanun-ı Sani 1331 (1 February 1916).
- 112 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 536/71, Cemal to Talat, 19 Teşrin-i Evvel 1332 (31 October 1916); in another telegram about the appointment of a *kaymakam* to Birüssebi, he repeats the precondition of being a Turk for that position: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 487/19, Cemal to Talat, 25 Ağustos 1331 (7 September 1915).
- 113 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 507/56, Cemal to Talat, 17 Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (30 November 1915).
- 114 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 506/8, Cemal to Talat, 6 Kanun-ı Sani 1331 (18 January 1916).
- 115 For some example in this direction, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 487/11, Cemal to Talat, 21 Ağustos 1331 (3 September 1915); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 488/13, Cemal to Talat, 26 Ağustos 1331 (8 September 1915); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 479/21, Cemal to Talat, 28 Temmuz 1331 (10 August 1915).
- 116 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 246. The English translation of this paragraph is a little different:

Speaking of myself, I am primarily an Ottoman, but I do not forget that I am a Turk, and nothing can shake my belief that the Turkish race is the foundation-stone of the Ottoman Empire. The educational and civilising influence of the Turks cements Ottoman unity and strengthens the Empire, for in its origins the Ottoman Empire is a Turkish creation.

- Djermal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 251.
- 117 Djermal Pasha, *ibid.*, p. 252, Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 246.
- 118 Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” p. 794.
- 119 He described the delegation of authors that visited Syria toward the end of the year 1916 as “the most distinguished faces of the motherland [*Anavatan*].” For the whole of the document, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 538/11, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 8 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (21 November 1916); similarly, in his memoirs he depicts Anatolia as the motherland with the following remarks: Cemal uses in his memoirs the term *mader vatan* when describing the situation of the roads connecting Anatolia to Syria; Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 118; the sentence is as follows in the English version: “And here is the only road which keeps my army in touch with the home country!” Djermal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 143.
- 120 Djermal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 251.
- 121 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 483/63, Cemal to Talat, 28 Temmuz 1331 (10 August 1915).
- 122 However, Bekir Sami Bey refused this accusation: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 483/63, Bekir Sami to Talat, 7 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (20 January 1915).
- 123 Salim Ali Salaam, *Mudhakkiratu Salim Ali Salaam (1868–1938)*, Hassan Ali Hallak (ed.), Beirut: al-Dar al-Jami’iyya, 1982, pp. 188–189.
- 124 Ahmed Rasim, *Muharrir Bu Ya*, Ankara: MEB Yayinevi, 1969, pp. 116–121.
- 125 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, “Wechsel des hiesigen Generalgouverneurs,” 21 October 1915, Damascus.
- 126 Muhammad Kurd Ali, *al-Mudhakkirat, al-Juz’ al-Awwal*, Damascus: Matbaatu al-Taraqqi, 1948, p. 103.
- 127 Information regarding the relations between Celal Bey, the governor of Aleppo, and the Arabist notables, see: **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, “Wechsel des hiesigen Generalgouverneurs,” 21 October 1915, Damascus.

- 128 Conde de Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 36.
- 129 Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, pp. 33–34.
- 130 Jacobson, *ibid.*, p. 31.
- 131 Jacobson, *ibid.*, p. 50.
- 132 BOA, DH.ŞFR. 493/61, Cemal to Talat, 30 Eylül 1331 (13 October 1915).
- 133 Şakib Arslan claims in his memoirs that Cemal did not like Azmi Bey since the central government appointed the latter without his consent. Therefore, Azmi had to return shortly after his appointment: Şakib Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, Beirut: Dar al-Tali'a, 1969, pp. 177–178. Presumably for similar reasons, Cemal proposed the dismissal of Azmi, claiming that he could not perform as a governor in Syria: BOA, DH.ŞFR. 516/34, Cemal to Talat, 3 Nisan 1332 (16 April 1916).
- 134 Nermidil Erner Binar, *Şakir Paşa Köşkü: Ahmet Bey ve Şakirler*, İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2000, p. 47.
- 135 PA-AA, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Mutius to Hertling, Beirut, 23 June 1918.
- 136 Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 89.
- 137 PA-AA, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, Constantinople, 26 June 1918.
- 138 Ziya Şakir, *Paşalar*, p. 180; he also listened to the complaints of the people after the Friday prayer like the second caliph, Umar: Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 89.
- 139 Erden, *ibid.*, pp. 273–274.
- 140 Erden, *ibid.*, p. 58.
- 141 For their evaluations regarding the expedition see: Erden, *ibid.*, p. 2.
- 142 Enver to Cemal, 23 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (5 February 1915), in Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 46; Cemal to Enver, 23 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (5 February 1915), in Erden, *ibid.*, p. 47; Enver to Cemal, 20 Şubat 1330 (5 March 1915), in Erden, *ibid.*, p. 72; Cemal to Enver, 6 Temmuz 1331 (18 July 1915), in Erden, *ibid.*, pp. 149–154. In addition, Erden gives considerable importance to the preparations for the Egyptian Expedition: Erden, *ibid.*, pp. 85–101, 157–161.
- 143 Erden, *ibid.*, pp. 143–146.
- 144 Erden, *ibid.*, pp. 141–143.
- 145 Erden, *ibid.*, pp. 119–124.
- 146 Friedrich Freiherr Kress von Kressenstein, *Mit den Türken zum Suezkanal*, Berlin: Verlag Otto Schegel, 1938, p. 78.
- 147 Von Kressenstein, *ibid.*, pp. 119–120, 168, 179–180.
- 148 Von Kressenstein, *ibid.*, p. 143.
- 149 Von Kressenstein, *ibid.*, p. 196.
- 150 Falih Rifkî Atay, *Zeytindağı*, İstanbul: Ülkü Yayınevi, 1943, p. 43.
- 151 For some examples, see: Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, pp. 154–219.
- 152 Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, pp. 107–111.
- 153 Kurd Ali, *ibid.*, pp. 111–114.
- 154 Kurd Ali, *ibid.*, pp. 152–153.
- 155 Kurd Ali, *ibid.*, pp. 148–152.
- 156 For some examples, see: Ahmad Kadri, *Mudhakkirati an Thawrat al Arabiyya al Qubra*, Damascus: Manshuratu Wizarati al-Thakafah, 1993, pp. 39–281; Izzat Darwaza, *Mudhakkiratu Muhammad Izzat Darwaza-al-Mujallad al-Awwal*, Beirut: Dar al Gharb al Islami, 1993 pp. 270–278; Faris al-Khoury, *Awraku Faris al-Khoury*, Damascus: Talas, 1989, pp. 134–142; Amin Said, *Al-Thawrat al-Arabiyya al-Qubra*, Cairo: Maktabatu al-Madbuli, Undated, pp. 108–118.
- 157 Al-Khoury, *ibid.*, pp. 134–142; Said, *ibid.*, pp. 108–118.
- 158 For the pro-Ottoman feelings of the common people, see: Salim Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, Berkeley: California University Press, 2011, p. 105; for the dissatisfaction of the people in Jerusalem with the entrance of the Ottoman Empire into the war, see: Tamari, *ibid.*, p. 107; for some evaluations about the epidemics, see: Tamari, *ibid.*, p. 108; for the image of Cemal Pasha, see: Tamari, *ibid.*, p. 110;

- for the public works, see: Tamari, *ibid.*, p. 124; for the locust plague, see: Tamari, *ibid.*, p. 125. There are many more examples.
- 159 Conde de Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 36.
- 160 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 138; Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 112.
- 161 In a recent study on the abolition of the caliphate by Nurullah Ardiç, the rivalry between the CUP and the sharif was portrayed in such a way that the sharif was playing the British against the Ottoman caliphate. The author entirely ignores the sharif as a political actor and degrades it to a British agent disregarding the sharif's own political interests. Totally ignoring the CUP's intentions regarding the sharif's presence in the Hijaz, Ardiç claims that "When it became clear that the Ottoman Empire would indeed join the German side in the war, Sharif Hussein, who was already semi-independent, stood out as the best option for Britain's hopes of undermining the Caliphate": Nurullah Ardiç, *Islam and the Politics of Secularism*, London: Routledge, 2012, p. 200. However, as demonstrated by Kayalı, the sharif was compelled, by the CUP's policies, to change sides during the war, for details, see: Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, pp. 181–192. At the beginning of the war, he supported the Ottoman proclamation of war and sent troops to the first expedition against Egypt.
- 162 For the related chapter in Dündar's study, see: Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008, pp. 358–399.
- 163 See, BOA, DH.ŞFR. 486/118, Cemal to Talat, 30 Ağustos 1331 (12 September 1915); Cemal to Enver, 27 September 1917, *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698.
- 164 Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, London: Sage, 2010, pp. 17–18.
- 165 For an analysis of the Ottoman policy of subjugating these groups in the case of Transjordan, see: Eugene L. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1850–1921*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- 166 Linda Schatkowski Schilcher, "The Famine of 1915–18 in Greater Syria," in John Spangolo (ed.), *Problems of the Modern Middle East in Historical Perspective: Essays in Honor of Albert Hourani*, Oxford: Ithaca Press, 1992.
- 167 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 193.

1 Elimination of the “Arabist barrier”

Cemal Pasha and the Arabist movement

“To maintain peace and order” in Syria was among Cemal Pasha’s primary aims. In Cemal’s mind that meant the elimination of all “barriers” between the state and the different peoples of Syria so as to free them to become “ideal citizens.” To that end, immediately after his arrival in Syria, Cemal took action to eliminate such “barriers.” In terms of their social impact, undoubtedly the most drastic “measures” were taken against the Arabist movement, which was demanding a certain degree of autonomy for the Arab provinces.¹ A short while after his arrival in Syria, Cemal launched a process of prosecution against the members of the Arabist party – all the groups defending Arab decentralization – using documents seized from the French consulates in Beirut and Damascus that revealed negotiations between the reformist Arabs and the French consuls, mainly over the use of French influence on the Ottoman government to implement decentralizing reforms in Syria. Using those documents as evidence, Cemal tried the party members as traitors against the Ottoman Empire and punished them severely. Some of them were hanged in the squares of Damascus and Beirut, while others were sent into exile in the cities of inner Anatolia, whose population was overwhelmingly Turkish speaking. Understandably, as a result of these actions, Cemal came to be seen as one of the most “black-hearted” figures in the history of the Arabist movement.

Today it is well known that the adherents of the Arabist movements, to a large extent, supported the continuation of Ottoman rule in the Arab lands. Rather than demanding independence from the Ottoman Empire, they demanded proportional participation of the Arabs in the government and insisted that more space be given to Arabic culture in government policies implemented in the Arab provinces. In spite of the abundance of academic studies on Arab nationalism and its history,² academic studies devoted to understanding the intentions of the CUP regarding the Arabist movement and the perception of the political actions of the leading Arabs by the Unionists are very limited in number.³ This chapter mainly concentrates on Ottoman policies regarding the Arabist movement in Greater Syria, taking Cemal Pasha’s governorate in Syria as a case study. Before proceeding to an analysis of his draconian actions to suppress the movement, it will be best to

examine the Young Turk mindset and policies regarding the Arabist movement in the years preceding the war to better understand the origins of Cemal's actions and see the continuity and change in the CUP's policies.

The Young Turks and the Arabist parties before the war

Hasan Kayalı asserts in his acclaimed book that "in the Unionist view of Ottomanism, ethnic, religious and linguistic differences were of no import."⁴ From this point of view, he concludes that the principal aim of the Unionists was to centralize the empire. It is true that the CUP did not ascribe importance to the empire's various *ethnies* in its policies. However, the Unionists also reacted against the usage of *ethnie* as a means of opposition, if not against the existence of opposition as such. The point that Kayalı left unexamined is that the Unionist attitude toward the different *ethnies* did not only lead the CUP to regard these as insignificant variables in their policies, but also resulted in projects to eliminate the opposition movements that ascribed importance to the *ethnies* of the empire. Their firm belief in the centrality of the state for re-forming the empire did not provide any space for ethnic or non-ethnic opposition. The decentralist opposition offered an alternative set of behaviors to shape the newly emerging modern Ottoman citizens based on the cultural differentiation of the nations of the empire. Therefore, as assessed earlier in detail, the CUP's members saw all kinds of opposition as tantamount to "treason to the Ottoman fatherland" and, in Cemal's words, wanted "to do away with" it.⁵

In this context, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that, from the beginning of its accession to power in 1913, the CUP tried to eliminate the Arabist movement using various methods. They wanted to make the Arabists abandon their demands for reforms by giving them government posts and persuading or punishing them, instead of taking their demands into consideration. They thought that giving privileges to these figures would save the empire from a "separatist" movement. In this sense, they largely followed the empire's classical methods for eliminating movements of opposition within the imperial realm. However, in their first years in power, the Unionists had to give some promises of reforms to members of the reformist Arabist Parties, such as al-Fatat, al-Lamarkaziyya, and al-Muntadi al-Adabi, probably because they were afraid of any foreign intervention in favor of the demands of the Arab reformists. The Arab Congress held with the participation of all the reformist Arab parties in Paris between June 18 and 23, 1913⁶ constituted a turning point in this regard. Following their meeting, the prominent Arabist participants of the Arab Congress visited the Ottoman Embassy in Paris and the French Foreign Ministry to declare these resolutions. Via the ambassador, they requested that the Ottoman Empire implement the decisions of the congress. From the French government, the Arabists demanded support for these reform requests and pressure on the Ottoman government to this end. They also emphasized to the French officials that they were loyal to the empire. The

CUP sent the prominent Unionist Midhat Şükrü to inform them that their demands for reforms had been accepted by the government and that they would be implemented shortly.⁷ Their demands, as agreed by the CUP leaders, were principally to make the government more decentralized, to redesign the curriculum of primary and secondary schools to include the Arabic language, to issue court decisions in Arabic in addition to Turkish, and to allow the submission of petitions to the authorities in Arabic.⁸ According to the memoirs of Shakib Arslan, the CUP made similar promises to a "pro-CUP" Arab delegation in a meeting held in Istanbul in the same period.⁹

The most important of the Arabists' demands was the change of the language of instruction to Arabic in the Arab provinces. In this regard, on August 11, 1913 (Temmuz 29, 1329) the Sadaret (Grand Vizerate) instructed the Ministry of Education to begin preparations for teaching in Arabic in the state schools of the Arab provinces.¹⁰ A "Commission for Arabic Education" (Arabca Tedrisat Komisyonu) was established within the body of the University of Istanbul (Darülfünun). The main task of the commission was to prepare schoolbooks in Arabic for the Ottoman Arabs. The commission requested schoolbooks in Arabic as examples from Egypt¹¹ and Beirut.¹² While some of the books from Egypt were approved, others were refused on the grounds that they were written for Egypt and not suitable for the Ottoman country. This was particularly true of history and geography books. By mid-December 1913, most of the books had been determined by the commission.¹³ In the same regard, a *sultani* school that would teach in Arabic was established in Beirut on October 7, 1913 (Eylül 24, 1329).¹⁴ Also in response to the demands of the Arabists, the government started to replace state officials in the Arab provinces who could not speak Arabic with those who could.¹⁵ For example, the secretary of the Jaffa Custom House was dismissed because he did not know Arabic.¹⁶ Similarly, upon a complaint, the central government requested the dismissal of the judge of Nablus if he could not speak Arabic sufficiently.¹⁷

While the CUP gave promises to the reformist Arabs, on the one hand, they considered methods for eradicating the Arabism movement, on the other. This is mainly because the CUP's mindset was intolerant of opposition and, therefore, did not see the Arabists as well intentioned. The Unionist leaders thought the Arabists were selfish profit seekers and self-aggrandizers who wanted to separate the Arab lands from the empire. A conversation between Talat and Mahmud Nedim, the last Ottoman governor in Yemen and also a CUP member, clearly reveals the Unionists' opinions and intentions regarding the Arabists:

One day, Talat Bey took me aside and asked:

"I don't like those Arabists [*Arap iftirakçıları* in the original text]. Yet, we are not so blind that we can't see the aims that they seek ... What do you say? Have you learnt their real aims thoroughly, in detail? In particular, is there full agreement among them?"

I replied:

"I don't think that there is an agreement among them regarding ideals and intentions, as affairs stand. Almost all the prominent Arabs have gathered here [in the Arabist parties] ... In my opinion, since the self-seekers constitute the majority [of them], first of all, they should be satisfied. By saying they should be satisfied, I should add that I think it is not appropriate to silence them by means of violence [*cebrü şiddet*] in these days."

Talat Bey:

"... When you dissect their demands, you see that the demands and claims they voice are the product of their intolerance of our rule."

Here was the opinion of the CUP. However, they [the CUP] could not hold that against them [the Arabists]. It was appropriate, then, not to hold that against them.¹⁸

Reading between the lines of the conversation it can be seen that, as was the case with the other opposition movements, there was a desire among the CUP leaders to eliminate the Arabist movement by various means. Talat, in particular, saw them as "separatists" who were "intolerant" of Ottoman rule and were, therefore, "collaborators" with the Great Powers in Syria. An unsigned report sent from Beirut on March 26, 1914 regarding the methods of struggle against Arabism, presumably written by an influential CUP member who was probably sent there to investigate the current state of Arabism and find ways to eliminate it, is another example of the Unionist approach to the Arabs. Similar to the discussion quoted above, the beginning of this report reveals the Unionists' suspicions about the Arabist movement. The author describes Arabism as a movement with connections to foreign powers and which, therefore, aimed at separating the Arab provinces from Ottoman rule. Because of its foreign origins, the movement was harmful to the country. Therefore, the movement should be eliminated by way of winning over its members through various methods. In this regard, the writer offers some advice to the central government on how to eliminate the decentralist parties in Beirut that bears some similarities to the policies applied by Cemal during his governorate. He advises three methods in the struggle with Arabism: some of the Arabists should be rewarded with government posts, while others should be punished moderately, and the rest should be subjected to what the author calls persuasion.¹⁹

In concrete terms, this meant that the government should gratify some members of the party, such as Rafiq al-Azm and Mukhtar Bayhum, by appointing them to prestigious governmental posts. Secondly, Abd al-Ghani al-Uraisi, the editor of *al-Mufid* newspaper, should be persuaded about the good intentions of the government, since he was acting according to his conscience. The third way that the writer recommends to prevent further participation of the people of Beirut in the Arabist movement was to punish the members of the movement who tried to turn the sentiments of the common people against the government and who undertook to make the government look weak before

the Great Powers. He claims that the people of Beirut would be spoiled if the government showed indulgence to them about their political concerns. However, if the government punished them, they would repent of their partisanship. Interestingly enough, the writer cites a decrease in smuggling following the arrest of smugglers as an example to prove his argument.²⁰ The similarity between this writer's approach and that of Cemal to the elimination of the Arabist movement shows the CUP's intolerance to the opposition.

Another unsigned report explains the increase in the sympathy of the Arabs to the Arabist movement as a result of the "injustice" of the Ottoman government and the "underdevelopment" of the Arab provinces. If the Ottoman government had made the Syrian provinces as developed as Egypt and provided them with "justice," then all the Arabs would be loyal to the Ottoman caliph. It was meaningless to wait for "anti-government" movements to come to an end as long as the corruption of the Ottoman police continued.²¹ As will be examined in Chapter 5, Cemal also saw the "Ottomanization" of the Syrian provinces as contingent on their material development.

The journalist Ahmet Şerif, an interviewer for the Unionist newspaper *Tanin*, wrote in 1910 indicating that a similar approach toward Arabism was common among the Turks at that time. The following remarks from him are significant for demonstrating the perception of the Arab question among the Turkish governing elite:

People say and have been saying that there is not [such] an Arab question; this is the invention of some self-seekers, some ill-disposed people and a few Arabic newspapers up to no good. It is an illusion of sentiments and opinion that was followed by some to sow discord among the combined Ottoman elements.²²

It is noteworthy that, as observed by Ahmed Şerif, none of the CUP rulers dealt with the Arabists' demands for reform. They primarily saw the members of the Arabist party as self-seekers, and never made any reference to their demands for the reorganization of the empire. Instead, they always insisted on making a distinction between Arabs and the Arabists. Three aspects of these assessments are crucial for understanding Cemal's way of dealing with Arabism: first, the perception of Arabists as self-seekers who, therefore, could be bought in return for prestigious posts; secondly, the underestimation of their political demands regarding the administration of the Arab provinces; finally, regarding them as agents of foreign powers. The most important of these was the belief in the necessity of bribing them to accept the political line of the CUP to eliminate the Arabist threat of "separatism."

Cemal's perception of the Arabist movement and its intentions

Cemal was no different from the mainstream of the CUP in his approach to the aims and intentions of the Arabist movement. His remarks, both in his

memoirs and his contemporary correspondence, clearly demonstrate his intolerance of the opposition. However, his actions were quite radical compared with the methods of the pre-war period. First of all, like many other CUP leaders, Cemal regarded the Arabists as self-seekers rather than true reformers. The statements quoted below demonstrate that Cemal also thought the Arabists were deceitful and could be bought with money:

Through his agency [Abd al-Qarim al-Khalil] I had a meeting with some of the most influential revolutionary leaders, including one of their greatest zealots ... I explained to them the views of the Government, and insisted that it would be possible to liberate the Mohammedan world from a foreign yoke if the great war ended with a victory for us. All of them – without exception – agreed with what I said ... In the same breath these so-called revolutionaries, starting with Abdul Kerim el Halil [*sic*], began a doleful tale about their poor financial position and great need of money. I distributed pretty substantial sums between Abdul Kerim el Halil, Melumed Kurd Ali [*sic*] and Abdul Gani el Arisi [*sic*]. From that time onwards these gentlemen were my most humble servants, and assured me that they would lose no time in doing everything in their power to assist me.²³

Moreover, his contemporary writings are filled with revilement and contempt against the Arabists. Before he started his process of prosecution targeting the Arabists, Cemal assuaged Talat's concerns about possible unrest among the Arabs that could result with these remarks: "by breaking the heads of these accursed [*mel'un*] [people], there would be no Arab question to emerge."²⁴ In another telegram, Cemal described the Arabists as "well-known traitors," "wicked" (*hain*), and "lacking backbone" (*mesleksiz*).²⁵ However, there is no mention of the political concerns of the Arabists in Cemal's telegrams, nor any reference to Arabism as a political program demanding reforms in the Arab provinces.

Because of these convictions, Cemal thought the Arabist movement had to be eliminated. On the other hand, in his memoirs, he claims that when he arrived in Syria he invited the prominent members of the Arabist party to his headquarters and reached an agreement with them for their support of the war effort. However, afterwards, he decided to punish the Arabists upon discovering the efforts of Abd al-Qarim al-Khalil and Rida al-Sulh to prepare a revolt against the government in Tyre (Sur) and Sidon (Saida).²⁶ This would indicate it was a fear of a revolt organized by the Arabists in Syria that compelled Cemal to punish them. However, both his contemporary telegrams and the testimony of persons who knew him demonstrate the prior planning of the prosecutions. In a telegram sent to Talat at the beginning of the process, Cemal says the appropriate time has come to begin punishing the Arabists, whose "treason" was well known, notifying Talat of the activities of Abd al-Qarim al-Khalil and Rida al-Sulh.²⁷ Thus, here Cemal

demonstrates that he took the planning of a revolt as an opportunity to destroy the Arabist movement.

Furthermore, his efforts to arrest the prominent Arabist Abd al-Hamid Zahrawi,²⁸ who presided at the Arab Congress in Paris, and senator in the Ottoman Parliament and who was not in Syria at that time, in order to "finish him off" using this event as an opportunity, is further evidence for the prior planning of the executions. But Cemal notes that, because of Talat's opposition, he abandoned the idea of hanging Zahrawi at that time.²⁹ The Austrian consul in Beirut, on the other hand, wrote that most of the Muslim members of the reformist Arab movement had cut all their ties with Egypt and, therefore, felt themselves secure against any punishment by the state.³⁰ Moreover, in the estimation of the celebrated orientalist Martin Hartmann, who was employed within the body of the German army in World War I as an expert on the Orient, the Arabist movement was not strong enough to drag its members into a revolt against the Ottoman government. The Arabs who cooperated with Great Britain were rather those who resided in Egypt.³¹

It is noteworthy that Cemal's activities met with little resistance at the level of the central government. In the beginning, Talat opposed the hanging of Abd al-Hamid Zahrawi since he was afraid of public disturbance in Syria.³² According to the memoirs of Muhittin Birgen, the editor of *Tanin*, several times Talat refused Cemal's requests to deliver Zahrawi to Syria for the same reason. But later he had to send the senator to Syria due to pressure from Enver and Cemal.³³ Similarly, Faliḥ Rıfıkı Atay notes that Enver Pasha wanted to prevent the execution of Shafiq al-Muayyad.³⁴ The "convinced" Arab member of the CUP, Shakib Arslan, claims in his memoirs that Enver and Talat gave implicit consent to Cemal's atrocities by giving him free rein in Syria.³⁵ In the same way, Faliḥ Rıfıkı says Talat's and Enver's requests that Cemal pardon some Arabists did not mean that they were against Cemal's policies. In essence, they agreed with Cemal that the "traitors" had to be punished, but, because of personal relationships, they demanded exemptions for particular individuals.³⁶ In view of the general attitude in the CUP against the Arabists, it is not surprising that the central government approved of Cemal's reign of terror.³⁷

Cemal's remarks quoted above suggest that he did not generalize his ideas about the Arabists to all of the Arab population. Moreover, he expresses his confidence in the civil population of Syria in his memoirs.³⁸ This confidence, however, was not because of his perception of Syrians as loyal supporters of Ottoman unity, but because of what he saw as their apolitical situation.

As for Cemal's attitude regarding the cultural demands of the Arabs, it can be said that he was not against these ideals in principle, but that he did not believe in the Arabists themselves. Most of the nationalist Arabs claim in their memoirs that Cemal aimed at the elimination and subsequent Turkification of Arab culture. He saw the Arabists as threats to his plans for the Turkification of Syria and therefore severely punished the members of this movement.³⁹ However, Cemal did not actually express much concern about

the increase in Arab national awareness. In a speech that he delivered at an event organized by the prominent Arabists Abd al-Qarim al-Khalil and Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar in the beginning of January 1915,⁴⁰ he openly advised the Arab youth to work for the national awakening of the Arabs, and follow his suggestion to gather under the flag of the caliph:

Today I am in a position to assure you that the Turkish and Arab ideals do not conflict.⁴¹ They are brothers in their national strivings, and perhaps their efforts are complementary. The aims of the Young Turks⁴² are to awaken national feeling in the Turkish nation, train their countrymen to work, free them from the Slav yoke, give them health and national expansion, increase the welfare and prosperity of Turkish countries ...

The Young Turks have resolved to work tirelessly to achieve these objects. As one of them, I appeal to you in your own tongue that, as the representatives of Young Arabia, you, too, should work for the success of this cause ... I turn to the youth of Turkey and Arabia and say these two nations will be doomed to destruction the moment they separate. Discord between these two great pillars of the Islam religion will bring it the downfall of the Mussulman power, and ultimately it will be impossible to avert slavery under the Slavs.⁴³

As can be seen in this text, for Cemal national awareness was not dangerous as long as it was not influenced by foreign powers, which would undermine loyalty to the Ottoman Empire, and as long as it did not prevent the integration of the Syrian lands into the imperial body, offering an alternative political system. His focus was rather on the increase of Syrian loyalty to the Ottoman Empire. Cemal Pasha hanged the Arabists not because they championed the Arab awakening, but because they called for the decentralization of the empire and had connections with the Great Powers. Cemal was so "blindly" committed to a particular (centralist-monolithic) form of state that he could not notice Arab "loyalty" no matter how plainly and honestly it was pledged. This was a fundamental problem for Cemal and many of his colleagues. In sum, he identified the ideal Arabs through their loyalty to the empire rather than their cultural or linguistic sensitivity.

The pasha did not target those Arabists who had no relationship with foreign powers but merely wanted to bring about a cultural renaissance among the Arabs. The most conspicuous example of this is his treatment of journalist Muhammad Kurd Ali. In the years preceding the war, Kurd Ali wrote provocative articles in his newspaper, *Muqtabas*, on the impact of Ottoman rule in Syria and blamed the Turks for the sluggishness of the Arabs. He called for a national awakening among the Arabs to throw off this idleness. In addition, he promoted academic studies to increase the cultural awareness of the Arabs.⁴⁴ However, the documents seized from the French consulates showed Kurd Ali's sincere allegiance to the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Kurd Ali's mistrust of the Great Powers and his repeated refusal of offers of

cooperation from foreign consuls⁴⁶ and German diplomats⁴⁷ placed him in the most immediate circle of Cemal Pasha, even if he was among the founders of the LCP in Syria.⁴⁸ Another case in point is Salim Ali Salaam, who was apprehended and tried in the court martial at Aliye, but was neither hanged nor exiled because Cemal was informed about his reaction to the intervention of the Great Powers.⁴⁹ Cemal explains in his memoirs that:

A Mohammedan of Beirut, member of the Arab Congress which met in Paris at the beginning of 1913, said to Monsieur Pichon, the French Foreign Minister: Although we have called our congress in Paris, our only object is to obtain reforms for the Arab provinces from the Ottoman Government. We want neither a French occupation of Syria nor a French protectorate.⁵⁰

The person mentioned in the quotation was most probably Salim Ali Salaam himself. Possibly, Cemal learned this from the documents seized from the French consulate and, therefore, did not punish Salaam like he did some of the other Arabists. The sensitivity of the Arabists toward Arabic and Arab culture was of no importance for Cemal. The problem was their alleged "separatism," rather than their "cultural nationalism."

The process of punishment: execution and exile

As explained above, when Cemal first arrived in Syria, he formed good relations with the prominent Arabists. He sought the friendship of Arab notables and showed hospitality toward them.⁵¹ He appointed the prominent Arabist Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar as his physician.⁵² However, the members of the Arabist parties thought that the Ottoman Empire would collapse when the battles at Gallipoli commenced and that Syria would be occupied by foreign powers. Therefore, the Arabists planned to become organized in order to play an effective role in the future of Syria and to negotiate with Great Britain on a plan.⁵³ Rida al-Sulh and Abd al-Qarim al-Khalil held a meeting in Tyre and Sidon and decided to rebel against the Ottoman Empire in the event of an Ottoman defeat.⁵⁴ It was a dangerous movement militarily for Cemal Pasha, since these coastal regions were far from being under the control of the Ottoman government. They could receive assistance from the Entente navy in the event of a rebellion.⁵⁵ But, after a short while, their intentions were revealed to Cemal. According to Kurd Ali, even their meetings and the discussions they had during them were reported to Cemal by spies.⁵⁶

According to the documents in the Ottoman Archives, Cemal began to think about prosecuting and punishing the Arabists in early May 1915. In a telegram to Talat he explained that the Arabists had to be eliminated in order to maintain peace.⁵⁷ Consequently, and as a result of his general bias against Arabism, he began to arrest prominent members of the Arabist parties in July

1915. His telegram about the reasons for these arrests demonstrates that Cemal was well informed of all the details of the Arabists' plans:

The accusations against them are very simple. Although we gratify them in many ways, they incorporated the Arab caliphate into their official programs to separate Arabness from Turkishness. They dealt with these issues following the general amnesty. After we proclaimed mobilization, they resorted to the necessary means and warned their branches that the time had arrived to realize that [aim]. Finally, during the Entente's campaign in Gallipoli, they assumed that the collapse of [the Ottoman] government was imminent and they began to propagandize in the vicinity of Sur [Tyre], Sayda [Sidon], and Merc-i Uyun. So I put my hands on their shoulders [*işte o zaman onların omuzlarına ellerimi yapıştırdım*]. I am about to complete my investigation. They are few in number and I arrested almost all of them.⁵⁸

Quite the reverse of what Cemal claimed, there is no reference in the memoirs of the Arabists to any plans regarding the creation of an Arab caliphate. It is possible that by this Cemal was referring to the program of the Arabists in Egypt.

At the end of the investigation, the court martial decided to hang eleven of the arrested individuals. These decisions were implemented on August 21, in Beirut.⁵⁹ The hanged persons were prominent notables in Syria. The most eminent person among them was the president of the Arabist society Muntada al-Adabi (the Literary Club),⁶⁰ Abd al-Qarim al-Khalil,⁶¹ whose origins lay in the Shiite community of Jabal 'Amil in Lebanon.⁶² As mentioned earlier, upon the opposition of Talat, Cemal delayed "the conviction" of Abd al-Hamid Zahrawi.⁶³ According to the report of the Austrian consul, the majority of the hanged persons were state officials, such as mayors and tax collectors, as well as journalists.⁶⁴ The consul states in another report that the aim of the committee was to create an Arab caliphate.⁶⁵ According to the consul, Amir Abdullah, who was arrested in August 1915, from the celebrated Jazairi family of Damascus, had established a society called Jamiyat-i Muhammadi (the Society of Muslims) aiming at the transfer of the caliphate from the Turks to the Arabs in the years prior to the war.⁶⁶ After carrying out the death penalties, Cemal sent a delegation to Istanbul headed by the *mufti* of the army, Asad al-Shukayr, and composed of Syrian scholars (*ulama*) and journalists to pledge the loyalty of Syria to the caliph and to explain that everything was fine in Syria.⁶⁷ There were 33 people in the delegation from various cities of Syria, such as Hama, Jerusalem, Damascus, Kerak, and Hauran. Only two of them were journalists; the others were scholars.⁶⁸

The prosecutions of members of the Arabist parties following the executions demonstrate that Cemal did not only aim at the suppression of a possible rebellion, but also wanted to destroy the existence of the opposition in Syria. The process is also revealing of the CUP's intolerance of the opposition

explained in the beginning of this study. After the execution of the first group of Arabists in August 1915, he expanded the scope of the investigations, turning them into a process of eliminating the Arabist movement in Syria. Not only the members and sympathizers of the Arabist parties, but also their relatives and some non-Arabist notables were arrested. There were ex-mayors, muftis, deputies, etc. among those arrested.⁶⁹ Some of them, like Abd al-Ghani al-Uraisi, Tawfiq al-Bisat, and Arif Shahab, managed to escape to the desert. However, they were caught by the Bedouins and delivered to the authorities.⁷⁰ According to Kurd Ali, when Abd al-Wahhab al-Inglizi was about to be arrested, he was outside Syria and Talat Pasha suggested he escape abroad. However, being sure of himself, al-Inglizi chose to go to Syria.⁷¹

This time, the accusations were more ambiguous. In light of the documents seized from the French consulate, all the members of the Arab opposition parties were interrogated, regardless of the degree of their active involvement in provoking people against the government after the proclamation of the war. They were accused of attempting to separate the Arab lands from the Ottoman government, and, hence, cooperating with the greatest enemies of Islam.⁷² At the end of the trial process, 21 leading figures of the Arabist party were sentenced to death on May 6, 1916. Fourteen of them were hung in Beirut and the others were put to the gallows in Damascus.⁷³ Besides the hangings, Cemal sent many members of the notable families into exile. Most of the exiles were relatives of the hanged notables.⁷⁴ It is noteworthy that the decree of the Ottoman sultan approving the executions of Arabists bears the date of June 14, 1916. This means Cemal implemented the executions before receiving the sultan's approval.⁷⁵ A special law was put into effect at the beginning of the war enabling army commanders to approve and implement the decisions of martial courts before the confirmation of the sultan. The sultan had to approve these decisions following their implementation.⁷⁶

Some details given by Ali Fuad Bey, the chief of staff of the 4th Army, shed light on the legality of the process. Ali Fuad notes that, before the commencement of the trial process, some members of the martial court were changed. When the new members of the court arrived in Damascus, they asked for directives about their new tasks. In spite of this subordination to Cemal, at the end of the judgment process, they had decided to put only three or four people to death. Other prisoners had been sentenced to internment and hard labor. However, Cemal changed this judgment and decided to impose capital punishment on all the accused persons without heeding the warning of the president of the martial court, Şükrü Bey, that Cemal would be responsible before history. Cemal's answer to this warning is worth noting: "may history rip up on your head" (*tarih kafanda paralansın*).⁷⁷ This means that even the president of the court martial, who decided to put the Arabists to death, saw Cemal's decisions as unjust.

Furthermore, when the documents confiscated from the consulates are analyzed, there is in fact very little evidence to justify charges of "treason" in

the circumstances of the Ottoman politics of the time. First of all, before the war the Ottoman state did not have full authority over its territory. As a result of the balance of power, the Great Powers obtained considerable *de facto* privileges within the Ottoman lands and they could interfere in the course of the events in Ottoman domestic politics. In the same way, they could force the state to make reforms in some regions of the empire, as in the cases of Macedonia and Armenia. The support of a Great Power was one of the most effective ways in the Ottoman Empire to force the government to make reforms. In this regard, in 1903, while the Young Turk movement was in opposition, Cemal himself had appealed to a British diplomat for support for reforms in the Ottoman Empire as part of a Young Turk delegation.⁷⁸ In the Unionist era, Cemal was the head of the pro-French faction in the CUP and he established a Turco-French friendship society to improve relations between France and the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁹ Most of the negotiations between the Arabists and the French consuls should be evaluated in this context. As the most influential power in Syria, the attitude and projects of France were crucial for the Arabists, who aimed to forestall any foreign intervention in Syria. In fact, most of the documents showed Arabists interrogating France's future plans regarding Syria. The Muslim reformists of Syria, who constituted almost all of the prosecuted Arabists, principally demanded French protection from any intervention by the Ottoman central government in the reform process in Syria. Besides France, the reformists had also established relations with British consulates. However, the British consuls had destroyed their documents when they left Syria at the beginning of the war.⁸⁰ Moreover, the number of members of the reformist societies who appealed to such powers was extremely limited; Germany's consul in Damascus states that only four persons were implicated "in these interesting documents."⁸¹ Many of the death sentences, therefore, were carried out with little evidence.⁸²

The trials were also problematic from the perspective of Ottoman law at that time. The documents referred to in the decisions of the court martial in Aliye were from years that preceded the general amnesty proclaimed by the Ottoman government after negotiations in 1913 forgiving all previous crimes. However, the Arabist reform parties maintained their activities against the Ottoman Empire in Egypt in a more radical way. According to Ali Fuad Bey and the Austrian consul in Beirut, the Arabists had stated that they cut their relations with Egypt after the general amnesty, and therefore they thought they should be left alone.⁸³ But the court martial neither accepted this claim nor proved that the suspects had maintained their ties with Egypt. In other words, Cemal punished the Arabists in Syria for the activities of the Arabists in Egypt.⁸⁴

In addition to the executions, Cemal decided to send a great number of notable families from many Syrian provinces into exile in Anatolian cities populated primarily by Turks. They would be sent to these towns for permanent settlement and their properties and lands would be compensated with equivalents in their new locations. Cemal established a commission to

determine the value of the properties belonging to the exiles. The families would be comfortably transported to their permanent settlement locations in a way that was "worthy of the glory of the government" (*hükümetin şanına yakışır bir şekilde*). They would never be permitted to live in misery and any officials disobeying these orders would be delivered to the martial court.⁸⁵

The families that were sentenced to exile from Syria were as follows: from Damascus, all members of the family of the famous Izzet Pasha al-Abid, the family of Sham'i Pasha (Sham'izades), which had great influence in Damascus, in Cemal's viewpoint, and the families of Shukri al-Asely and Shafiq el-Muayyad; from Homs, the family of Izzet al-Jundi, the most "harmful" branch of the Atasi family, according to Cemal, and some other families in Homs; in Baalbek, the celebrated Mutran family and the whole of Said Suleiman Pasha's family, and the whole of the Haidar family, as well as some Christian families. In total, 154 households were to be deported. Cemal added that the number of families deported could change in future.⁸⁶ According to a contemporary American report, the number of deportees was 5,000.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, in the first trial in 1915, the vast majority of the Arabists condemned in Aliye had migrated to Egypt during and before the war. The court martial ordered them to Syria for the trial. If they did not come, their assets would be confiscated.⁸⁸ On the other hand, according to the Austrian consul in Damascus, the exile of some Christian subjects was not due to political considerations. They were charged with violation of military regulations, such as selling alcohol to officers. They, too, were exiled along with their families.⁸⁹

The deportation process took place more or less in accordance with the orders of Cemal Pasha, and many Arab families were transported to various towns in Anatolia in proper style, at least relative to the conditions of war. Cemal strictly observed the process to ensure his orders were properly implemented in Anatolia.⁹⁰ He harshly opposed all requests to change his decisions. On all occasions, he reminded the central government that the Syrians' exile to Anatolia was not temporary.⁹¹ They were sent there to be permanent residents. When Cemal was informed that the exiles had relocated, he warned the central government with strongly worded remarks.⁹² Apart from this, the exiles lived in good conditions in their temporary settlement locations. When the government decided to annul their punishments and to return them to Syria, some of them appealed to Shakib Arslan to extend their stay due to the difficult living conditions created by the famine in Syria.⁹³

These executions and exiles had a significant impact on Syrian society and caused major changes in the attitudes of Syrians toward the Ottoman government. The following section deals with this impact.

Aims and impact of the executions and exiles

As indicated throughout this study, one of Cemal's aims in Syria was to create "order" there and transform the Syrian population into good citizens of the empire in keeping with his own model of citizenship. The most important

component of this goal was his policy toward the "adversary" components of the Muslim population of Syria, that is, the Arabists, who, in Cemal's mind, had the potential to influence the "conduct" of the Muslim population, which constituted the great majority of the Syrian society. Therefore, an analysis of the social and political repercussions of Cemal's repressive policies toward Muslim Arabist suspects will shed light on his mission in Syria.⁹⁴

In the existing literature, there are two approaches regarding the aims of Cemal's policy toward the Arabist movement. One group claims that Cemal aimed at the Turkification of Syria by executing and exiling the prominent Arabists.⁹⁵ On the other hand, Hasan Kayalı highlights the possible military dangers of the Arabists:

Cemal's actions in Syria were comparable in nature, if not in extent, to those policies pursued with respect to the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia. Both emanated from a fear that a nationalist uprising would come into being with encouragement from enemy powers. The threat was more perceived than real.⁹⁶

There is no doubt that Cemal took pride in his Turkishness, which was second only to his Ottomanness. As he says in his memoirs:

I am primarily an Ottoman, but I do not forget that I am a Turk, and nothing can shake my belief that the Turkish race is the foundation-stone of the Ottoman Empire. The Educational and civilizing influence of the Turks cements Ottoman unity and strengthens the Empire, for in its origins the Ottoman Empire is a Turkish creation.⁹⁷

However, when his policies in Syria are examined, it is apparent that he restricted this policy to partial Turkification of the public sphere, which can be seen as an attempt to increase the visibility of Ottoman rule in Syria. For instance, Cemal forbade the use of Arabic in government offices⁹⁸ and changed the language of instruction to Turkish in the government high school (*sultani*) of Damascus, while the teaching of Arabic continued. There is no evidence that he changed the language of instruction in the other state schools.⁹⁹ The use of Turkish on shop signs and other notice boards was made compulsory.¹⁰⁰ All these actions were implemented in regard to the other languages in the empire, for the sake of the "fraternity of the Ottomans."¹⁰¹ In the same vein, some consuls were ordered to write their correspondence only in Turkish. The Spanish consul in Jerusalem wrote of this, "The Turkish government continues with its policy of humiliating us all, it has been ordered that from now on correspondence cannot be written in Spanish."¹⁰² Possibly, many of these acts intended to demonstrate to the people that the Great Powers were no longer influential and to prove that the Ottoman government was the only sovereign power in Syria. In the same vein, Cemal probably hoped to facilitate the direct communication of the

Ottoman state with its citizens in Syria via the Turkish language. The imposition of Turkish on the Syrians was part of the destruction of intermediate elements, such as notables, between the state and the Syrians. In this way, the state would not need any mediator to express itself to its Arab citizens. Otherwise, Cemal did not aim at a total replacement of Arab culture in Syria with a Turkish equivalent. As will be detailed in Chapter 5, Cemal undertook, to a degree, to protect the Arabic heritage of Syria with his restoration of historical monuments built in the Arab style, and also opened schools teaching in Arabic, as in the case of the *Salahiyya* school.

As for the military threat, as will be detailed in the section regarding the conscription of Syrians in Chapter 5, before the executions of the Arabists, a group of suspected Arabist officers in the army had been sent to other fronts. Furthermore, instead of executions, exile could be chosen as a measure, as in the case of the Armenians, and the hanging of three or four persons would be enough to forestall a military danger. The meaning of the arrest of an Arabist senator in Istanbul and his transportation to Syria for execution goes deeper than any attempt to ward off military danger. The aims of these actions can be better understood through the analysis of the position of the notables in the Ottoman political system.

From the time of Mahmud II, local notables were seen by the Ottoman central government as obstacles to centralization. This became even more pronounced during the age of reforms and the *Tanzimat* period. The CUP resumed the policy of centralization after the Young Turk revolution. In the case of Syria, many of the local notables were intellectual leaders of society and were struggling actively on the cultural front against the Ottomanist policies of the central government on the grounds that the Ottomanization process was destroying the Arab spirit of Syria. Furthermore, they wanted an administratively decentralized, politically Arabist, and culturally Arab Syria, as opposed to the culturally Arab, politically Ottomanist, and administratively centralist vision of Cemal and the CUP. As explained above, they did not avoid contacting the Great Powers when necessary. In contrast, in the projected Syria of Cemal Pasha, the government ought to have full independence in its internal affairs and any groups that sought foreign intervention should be, at the very least, checked. Therefore, his policy toward Arabism needs to be evaluated as part of a whole together with his policies toward Zionism, Christians, and Lebanon. In the same context, Germany's consul in Damascus interpreted the death sentences, and the aim of Cemal's presence in Syria, as the reconquest of Syria. After his failure to cross the Suez Canal, the consul states, Cemal changed his mind and set this reconquest as a task for himself. In accordance with this aim, he established his headquarters in Damascus, the political center of Syria, instead of Birüssebi, the military center for the second expedition to the canal.¹⁰³ The consul adds that the trial of the Arabs was used as an occasion to destroy all political opposition, whether it had "treasonous" aims or not.¹⁰⁴ Cemal had not distinguished between "separatist" and "reformist" Arabists. He subjected all of them to

the same treatment,¹⁰⁵ in accordance with his approach toward the Arabists as explained in the previous section.

This is apparent in the correspondence between the CUP and Sharif Faysal, which had begun at the end of 1917 in hopes of signing a peace treaty that would put an end to Sharif Hussein's revolt. During the war period the Unionist leaders were concerned that the Arabs would make demands regarding the situation of Syria in the Ottoman Empire in the peace negotiations.¹⁰⁶ Presumably, a demand for the autonomy of Syria by the Arabist opposition would have paved the way for the later independence of Syria. The Ottoman experience of nationalism led them to this conclusion, as all the major nationalist movements in the empire had resulted in the independence of their respective communities from the Ottoman state. Cemal, therefore, hoped to eradicate the Arabist movement as far as possible by taking advantage of the circumstances of the war.

Cemal used execution and exile as methods to solve the Arab question. In his mind, the destruction of the Arabists in itself would solve the question. He revealed this belief in a telegram. With increasing desertions among the Arab exiles in Anatolia to join Sharif Hussein, he proposed that all the political exiles in Anatolia be sent to the court martial meaning the execution of these people.¹⁰⁷ A German report also states that Cemal saw his despotic measures as a means to solving the Arab question.¹⁰⁸

As for the social impact of his draconian rule, while trying to turn the Syrians into good Ottoman citizens, Cemal caused serious damage to the image of the Ottoman government in the eyes of the common people. With his punishment of the Arabists he hoped to destroy the endeavors of their parties "to separate Arabness from Turkishness."¹⁰⁹ However, as inferred from the consular reports describing the reaction of the common people to Cemal's actions, the biggest contribution to enmity between Arabs and Turks was made by Cemal himself. The reports sent in the beginning of the war demonstrate that the support of Syrian society for the activities of the Arabist parties was rather low. For example, according to a report from the Austrian consul of Damascus at the beginning of October 1914, with the outbreak of the European war, the popularity of the Arabist movement in Damascus was considerably reduced. The great majority of the people began to believe that the Turkish administration would defend them against foreign enemies.¹¹⁰ According to the report of the German journal *Der Nahe Orient*, "the worst agitators of the past" had become "ultra-patriots" after the proclamation of war.¹¹¹ In the same way, as described in the section on conscription, at the beginning of the war there was an overwhelming pro-Ottoman atmosphere among the Muslims of Syria, nourished by anti-imperialist propaganda. When the first executions were carried out, the German consul in Beirut expressed his embarrassment about the prosecution of a movement that still lacked mass support among the Syrians.¹¹²

However, the executions and exile orders changed this atmosphere dramatically. The Austrian consul in Beirut wrote that even the most pro-Ottoman

members of Syrian society had cried out in protest and that the execution of the Arab notables had ruined the concord between Arabs and Turks that had come with the outbreak of war.¹¹³ This was, to a large extent, due to the atmosphere of terror created within Syrian society by the punishments.¹¹⁴ The common people saw these verdicts as unjust and arbitrary and they were consequently afraid of being captured and punished in a similar manner.¹¹⁵ According to the remarks of the Austrian consul in Beirut, Cemal's prosecutions gave rise to a belief among the Syrians that he was not only trying to defeat the Entente powers, but also to weaken and eliminate the Arab element in Syria.¹¹⁶ Complaining about Cemal's policies in Syria, an Austrian representative in Constantinople stated that Cemal could have solved the Arab question with more moderate means and thereby increased the loyalty of the Arabs to the Ottoman government. Through his thoughtless actions, Cemal shifted all the sympathies among the Arabs to the British and French and increased the popularity of the Arabists.¹¹⁷ The consul states that if the British forces managed to invade southern Syria, it would be difficult to find support for the Ottoman government among the Syrians.¹¹⁸ According to an Austrian official in Istanbul, by April 1917 all the Arabs without exception were waiting to welcome the British troops with open arms.¹¹⁹ According to an interview held by a German official with some Arabs, Cemal's draconian policies had made some groups that had never before acted against the state into enemies of the state and alienated them from the government.¹²⁰

Cemal's despotic rule in Syria also contributed to a rapprochement between Muslims and Christians in Syria. According to a British intelligence report, their relations were excellent since both were "sick of the war and of the exaction of the Government."¹²¹ In a similar way, it is stated in a German report that a concord "never seen before" emerged between Christians and Muslims: "The hate felt against the Turkish oppressor made a unifying effect and the profound and numerous contrasts between the Arabs have been temporarily bypassed." The consul adds that "it was a result of Djemal's [*sic*] dictatorship and vexatious behavior" toward the Arabs.¹²²

Cemal's presence in Syria was so disturbing for the people that, when he visited Istanbul at the end of 1916, the notables of Syria sent telegrams to government authorities asking them to prevent him from returning to Syria.¹²³ As a result of all these pressures, according to the report of a German official, the upper classes of society were, to a large extent, alienated and turned against Ottoman rule.¹²⁴ Finally, it is worth mentioning that all these actions also damaged the German image in the eyes of the Syrians. Arabs, both Christian and Muslim, hated the Germans because they saw them as supporters of the "brutal Turkish rule."¹²⁵

In spite of their role in instigating antagonism between Arabs and Turks, the impact of Cemal's policies demonstrates that he managed, to a large extent, to achieve his objectives in Syria. By way of the executions and exiles, he destroyed the resistance of the Syrian notables against the increasing control of the state. Furthermore, by destroying the Arabist political opposition,

he eliminated any possibility of the subsequent rise of an Arabist organization that would have demanded autonomy or independence in the future were the Ottoman rule over Syria to have continued at the end of the war. According to the remarks of the German physician Mühlens, who worked with Cemal Pasha for some time as health supervisor of the 4th Army, a notable family in Syria could scarcely be found that had not seen some of its members hanged or exiled.¹²⁶ At the end of Cemal's rule, he summarized the aims of these actions as follows:

The people who were not directly affiliated to the *al-Lamarkaziyya* but in close contact with the executive members, those who were suspected by the administrative authorities of working against the political domination of the government, and those who engaged in banditry [*tagallub*] and rebellion [*serkeşlik*], attempting to libel the honor of the government in the eyes of the people [*hükümet üzerinde ahalinin mevki-i haysiyyetini ihlal edecek derecede*] were relocated from Syria to Anatolia.

The formation of an organization composed of notables aimed at challenging the domination of the government by setting up an equally or even more powerful structure was thus eliminated.¹²⁷

In summary, as he had intended, Cemal managed to destroy a mediating formation between the Ottoman state and the Syrian society. The elimination of the notables, which had begun with Mahmud II in the imperial realm, was completed in Syria with the draconian rule of Cemal Pasha.¹²⁸ It is certain that Cemal foresaw the reaction of Syrian society against his policies and that he was well aware that the Syrians would begin to resent Ottoman rule as a result of his punishments. However, Cemal did not foresee that Ottoman rule in Syria would come to an end following the war and presumably believed that, although the Syrians were disturbed by his policies at the time, in the long term, his policies would bring about a change in the sentiments of the Syrians toward the state.

Using the Ottoman caliphate against the Arabist movement

Aside from the executions and exiles, Cemal also used pan-Islamist policies as a tool in his struggle against Arabism. This was not only because he needed a public justification for his actions, but also because he was concerned about the Arabists of Syria supporting an Arab caliph in the future. Although they focused on the issue of reform in the Syrian provinces, and although they were against foreign intervention in principle, in his telegrams Cemal saw the Arabists as collaborators with the Entente and accused them of trying to establish an Arab caliphate.¹²⁹ In this way, they could potentially converge with British policy on the caliphate. In the years preceding the war, the caliphate was seen by Great Britain as a potential danger to its imperial rule, because of its spiritual and political claims over all Muslims, including those

in British colonies.¹³⁰ As a result of this concern, taking back the caliphate for the Arabs and thereby dividing Muslims had, in theory, become the most important aim of British policy regarding the Ottoman caliphate.¹³¹ Beginning with Abdulhamid II, the Ottoman sultans used their title of caliph as a political weapon against all the imperial powers.¹³² Especially in World War I, pan-Islamist propaganda served as the most important tool of the Central Powers against the Entente, which had a considerable Muslim population in its members' colonies.¹³³ The Arabists allegedly had relations with Egypt and disseminated Arabist feelings among the Syrians, which, in Cemal's viewpoint, could separate Arabs from Turks. Similarly, an uprising in Syria could jeopardize the pan-Islamist propaganda of the Ottoman caliphate. All these concerns were used as an argument both to justify his actions and to prevent any Arab inclination toward British propaganda regarding an Arab caliphate.¹³⁴ Thus, Cemal hoped to benefit from the anti-imperialist sentiments of the Syrians to legitimate his actions against the Arab "separatists."

For these reasons, the main target of Ottoman pan-Islamist propaganda was Great Britain, which was targeted for years by pan-Islamist authors as the greatest enemy of Muslim unity.¹³⁵ With this propaganda, it was implied that if the Muslims did not unite under the rule of the Ottoman caliph and but followed the "separatist" movements, then British occupation would be unavoidable for all Muslim nations. In this regard, with the outbreak of the war, the local politicians delivered speeches harshly criticizing British actions in Egypt. Similarly, the local Club des Emigrés Africains, which had been established to awaken anti-imperialist consciousness among the Algerians in Syria, used propaganda to create similar sentiments among the Algerian immigrants.¹³⁶ In addition, pamphlets were distributed in cities demonstrating Great Britain's "atrocities" against the Muslims under its rule. For example, in a pamphlet prepared by Shakib Arslan and distributed in Damascus through the newspaper of the *vilayet*, it is described in detail how the British government invaded Egypt and Yemen by playing Muslims against each other.¹³⁷ With such pamphlets, an open message was sent that, when Ottoman rule came to an end in Syria, the fate of the Syrians would be no different from that of the Egyptians and that if the "separatists" among the Arabs were supported and given an opportunity to reach their goals, the result would be the same. According to the Austrian consul, by the impact of those activities Great Britain became an enemy in the eyes of the Syrians in the beginning of the war.¹³⁸

Although not an activity directed against the Arabists, the illumination of the tomb of Saladin by the German emperor was another activity aimed at provoking Syrians to fight the enemies of the Islamic religion and to oppose their "extensions," that is, Arabists, pro-French Christian clergy, etc., in Syria. Saladin was the most famous Muslim commander among the Arabs, and had fought against the Crusades. By way of Saladin's example, the intended message was that the Entente powers were the contemporary Crusaders and that it was a religious duty for Muslims to resist them.¹³⁹ In circulars distributed

in the cities for pan-Islamic propaganda, the Entente was frequently compared to the Crusaders. In a brochure signed by Abd al-Aziz Chavish in February 1915, they were characterized as "adorers of the Cross" and "descendants of the Crusades." As indicated in the diaries of the Spanish consul in Jerusalem, these words caused anxiety among the native Christians.¹⁴⁰

The publication of newspapers was the most important part of pan-Islamist propaganda in Syria as an alternative to Arabism. The foundation of the *al-Sharq* newspaper can be considered a significant step in this sense. In the beginning, the planned name of the newspaper was *al-Islam*. This was an idea of the celebrated German orientalist Von Oppenheim, and the Germans would support the undertaking. However, Cemal opposed the German assistance and decided to publish the paper on behalf of the government,¹⁴¹ although retaining propaganda favoring the German-Ottoman alliance as one of the aims of the newspaper.¹⁴² However, there is no newspaper in Syria published under this name. Presumably, at the last minute the name of the newspaper was changed to *al-Sharq*.¹⁴³

The publication was intended by Cemal "to be the best distributed newspaper in Syria."¹⁴⁴ According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, *al-Sharq* had two target audiences: domestic and foreign lands. For foreign readers, the newspaper produced propaganda in support of the Ottoman caliphate. For the domestic audience the newspaper would aim at "advocating the Young Turks' idea of the state in Arabic." The consul explains that the aim of the newspaper was to save Syria from foreign influence and to transform its political relations. He states that the establishment of such a newspaper in Syria was necessary because all the existing newspapers in Syria were more or less under the influence of the Arabist movement. Moreover, the government had demonstrated its good will toward Arabness and the Arabic language with the publication of this newspaper.¹⁴⁵ The aims of the newspaper were declared in similar terms in its original program, when it was still slated to be called *al-Islam*:

- 1 The principal aim of the newspaper is to struggle for the securing of a common fate. It will encourage the Muslims living outside the Ottoman Empire to fight and work for the awakening of a national consciousness and the rise of their independent governments, reminding them of their old liberties and their nationalities [*anasır-ı kadime*].
- 2 Our enemies were particularly struggling to spread [*icra*] poisonous rumors in Syria and to make some ill-wishers [in Syria] into instruments of these vicious [*alçakça*] lies. The newspaper will demonstrate with full power [*bütün kuvvetiyle*] their true nature and eliminate misunderstandings ...
- 4 It will struggle with full power to rescue Egypt from the British yoke and help it become a part of its motherland, protecting its autonomy [as in the past].
- 5 The newspaper will not only deal with politics. But will also reserve the majority of its pages to scientific, economic, and ethical studies for the

training of the Syrian people materially and spiritually. In sum, it will strive to awaken and strengthen the patriotism of the Syrians and their youth. Providing the people with the details of the glorious [*büyük*] civilizational past of the Muslims [*İslamların*], it will invite them not to forget their gratifications [*haz*] and personalities [*nefs*] ... Up to now, everybody looked for their personal happiness outside the country and the wealth of the country was used by the foreigners. *El-Islam* will concentrate on disseminating the idea of the usage of the wealth of the country by our subjects.¹⁴⁶

Given the circumstances of war, the distribution of this newspaper abroad was difficult. Therefore, the aim of the newspaper was presumably restricted to the Ottoman realm.

In terms of meeting the goals of the newspaper, according to Shakib Arslan, when the newspaper was first published it was comprehensive and adequate. However, following the first month of its establishment, the government authorities intervened in the newspaper's editorial process and prohibited the publication of certain articles. Secondly, the scarcity of paper reduced the numbers of pages in the newspaper. As a result, the newspaper's original quality was lost.¹⁴⁷ The early issues of the newspaper are not available today. However, the later issues support the claims of Arslan. The articles concentrated on the "treason" of Sharif Hussein,¹⁴⁸ the liberation of Egypt from British rule,¹⁴⁹ relations between the Ottoman Empire and Germany,¹⁵⁰ and news about the German emperor and Germany.¹⁵¹ The propaganda aspect of the articles is overt. There is also much news in the newspaper praising Cemal Pasha.¹⁵²

After the commencement of the sharif's movement, the Ottoman government established an Arabic newspaper in Medina similar to *al-Sharq*, named *Hijaz*. This enterprise was put forward by Cemal Pasha to create consciousness (presumably pan-Islamic consciousness) among the people. A late professor of the Mekteb-i Sultani (Royal School) in Aleppo who had stayed in Egypt for a long time was appointed as the editor of the newspaper.¹⁵³

Despite this promotion of Muslim solidarity, however, the persecution of the Syrian Muslims shattered the impact of the state's pan-Islamist propaganda. Rather than being convinced to join a life and death struggle for the caliphate, the Syrians became inclined to think that in this process of punishment of the Arabists that Cemal Pasha had decided to eliminate the Arab element in the empire.¹⁵⁴ The pan-Islamist tools used in the struggle against the Arabist movement were unsuccessful because of Cemal's mistreatment of the Arabists.

Sharif Hussein's revolt, the British expedition, and the new moderation in the policy of Arabism

On June 10, 1916, the CUP government encountered an unexpected uprising in the Hijaz under the leadership of the *amir* of Mecca, Sharif Hussein.¹⁵⁵

Although they had suspected double play on the part of the sharif, trying to satisfy both the British and Ottoman sides, the CUP leaders, and Cemal Pasha in particular, did not expect a rebellion from Sharif Hussein.¹⁵⁶ Thus, in spite of its lack of connection to the Arabist movement in Syria,¹⁵⁷ the sharifian movement was seen as tied to Cemal Pasha's atrocities and regarded as part of an Arab reaction to them.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, the revolt of Sharif Hussein signaled a turning point in Cemal's iron-fisted Arab policy.

When the revolt broke out, Cemal Pasha first arrested those in Damascus who had close relations with Faysal and had helped him to escape from the city. All the relatives of the al-Bakri family, which had hosted Faysal while he was staying in Damascus and assisted him in leaving the city, along with Shukri Pasha al-Ayyubi and some other Syrian notables who were suspected of having close relations with Sharif Hussein were arrested.¹⁵⁹ Later Umar Rafi, a lawyer, his brother Abd al-Ghani Rafi, and Abd al-Qadir Kiwan, the preacher of the Umayyad Mosque, were arrested as well.¹⁶⁰

Those arrested were accused of spreading propaganda for the sharif's movement in Syria. In a search of the house of Abd al-Ghani Rafi, the police found a proclamation sent from Basra in the beginning of the year 1916 proposing that Syria, Iraq, and the Hijaz be united under the kingship and caliphate of the sharif and that Cemal Pasha be hanged. A copy of the same letter was found in the house of Shukri Pasha. A poem of praise written by Abd al-Qadir Kiwan was added to the end of the proclamation. In a letter from Umar Rafi found in the house of Shukri Pasha, it was written that trustworthy persons should have been respected and that it was necessary to terminate the rule of the tyrants. The governor of Syria, Tahsin Bey, implied in his report that Cemal had made a mistake with the apprehension of such a large number of people. The accusations against them were based on the activities of one or two people who had tried to recruit the others to the society that they wanted to establish to support the sharif.¹⁶¹

All those apprehended were accused of establishing a secret society to spread the sharif's propaganda in Syria. All of them denied the accusations.¹⁶² Shukri Pasha, the Rafi brothers, and Abd al-Qadir were sentenced to death penalty. Fawzi and Nasib al-Bakri, together with Faysal and Abdullah, the sons of the sharif, were sentenced to death in absentia. This time the process was slow and the decisions were not implemented out of fear of increasing the Arabs' hate of the Ottoman government in favor of Sharif Hussein.¹⁶³ Seventy Damascenes had been arrested as part of the investigation. Fifty-five of them were acquitted, including the deputy of Damascus, Faris al-Khoury.¹⁶⁴ In contrast to this policy of moderation, as part of the struggle against the sharifian movement, in the beginning of 1917 the *mufti* of Gaza, Arif, was hanged. According to the diaries of the Spanish consul, the social reaction to this event "was unimaginable, since the *mufti* ... had enormous influence among the Arabs, especially the Bedouins."¹⁶⁵

Apart from these arrests, Sharif Hussein's revolt caused a considerable transformation in the state's policies toward the Arabists and the Arabs in

general. In spite of the unlikelihood of a revolt in Syria in support of the sharif,¹⁶⁶ the risk of the sharif being elevated to the status of a hero who would save the Arabs from the Turkish tyranny compelled Cemal Pasha to moderate his Arab policy and adopt more measured methods in his struggle with the sharif in Syria through the policies of the central government.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, a disturbance combined with sharif's proclamation of himself as caliph would have totally ruined the Ottomans' general war policy, based on the idea of *Jihad* and the unity of Muslims around the Ottoman caliph.¹⁶⁸

In this regard, once the impossibility of suppressing the sharif's uprising in the short term became apparent, Cemal gave priority to policies that would persuade the Syrians that Sharif Hussein was a rebellious individual betraying the cause of uniting the Muslims around the Ottoman caliph. As a significant step in this direction, upon the proposal of the CUP's Hauran delegate, Wahji Bey Ayyubi, Cemal requested a *fatwa* from the most prominent scholars of Syria designating the sharif as a traitor against the Ottoman caliph.¹⁶⁹ At the end of September 1916, fourteen muftis from all the Syrian provinces issued a *fatwa* compelling all Muslims to force the sharif into compliance with the Ottoman caliph. The text of the *fatwa* is as follows:

Question: If the Muslims pay homage to a caliph, and if an *amir* from among them makes a mistake against this [caliph], if the [*amir*] intrigues against the caliph in collaboration with his enemies during war, and, in this way, [the *amir*] causes the disintegration and misdirection of the Muslims, is it the responsibility [of the Muslims] to battle against him [the *amir*] until he repents?

Answer: Yes, it is a responsibility, because, the word of Allah [the Quran] says:

"If one of you victimizes the other, then fight against the one that victimizes until he returns to the ordinance of Allah [Al-Hujura, 9]." and,

"Hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided [Ali Imran 103]."¹⁷⁰

A similar *fatwa* was issued by the prominent non-official *ulama* of Syria and Palestine. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, in spite of the fact that the *fatwa* was issued under the pressure of the government, it had a considerable impact among the Muslims of Syria.¹⁷¹

Simultaneously, the discourse of fraternity of Turks and Arabs is further highlighted. In this regard, a delegation of prominent authors arrived in Damascus from Istanbul to make amends for Cemal's executions and exiles. The delegation stayed in Syria from October 26 to December 24, 1916.¹⁷² According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, the aim of this delegation was to demonstrate the fraternity between Turks and Arabs, as well as Cemal's desire to show his efforts to improve the Syrian realm.¹⁷³ The delegation visited Lebanon, Beirut, Damascus, Jerusalem, and the Ottoman troops stationed in the desert.¹⁷⁴ They attempted to strengthen the religious ties

between Arabs and Turks, emphasizing the loyalty of the two peoples to the same caliph and sultan. In all the meetings organized in honor of the delegation, this basic principle was strongly emphasized.¹⁷⁵ Although Cemal claims that this visit created a good impression in Syria,¹⁷⁶ The Austrian consul states that all these activities stayed at the governmental level and that the common people remained totally indifferent to them.¹⁷⁷

The increasing danger of the British expedition in Palestine and the growing sympathy among the Syrians to the sharif's movement as a result of Cemal's draconian actions¹⁷⁸ caused some concerns in the Ottoman central government regarding the attitude of the Syrians. In this regard, first of all, the head of the State Council [Şura-yı Devlet], İbrahim Bey, was secretly sent to Mecca to reach an agreement with Sharif Hussein toward the end of the year 1916. According to the German ambassador, İbrahim was one of the most intimate friends of the sharif.¹⁷⁹ İbrahim offered Sharif Hussein broad autonomy in the Hijaz and a hereditary sharifate. However, the sharif answered that he was not striving for his personal benefit, but that he was working for the benefit of Islam, which had fallen into incapable hands. Thus, İbrahim Bey returned to İstanbul empty-handed.¹⁸⁰

Immediately after the failure of this undertaking, the cabinet of Talat Pasha began to change its policy toward the Arabs, hoping to dispel their frustration with the government. Talat began to think of ways to persuade Cemal to return from Syria¹⁸¹ since his name was so closely associated with violence there. The central government considered recalling him on the pretense that the Marine Ministry needed his undivided attention.¹⁸² However, the opposition of the army staff in Syria, including the Germans, about the military risk of replacing the commander general at such a critical time prevented such a step.¹⁸³ Von Kress specifically asked Enver during his visit to Syria not to dismiss Cemal for this reason.¹⁸⁴ Thus, this idea was abandoned on the grounds of military concerns.

Although the central government abandoned the idea of Cemal's dismissal, it also heeded more seriously than ever the requests of the Arabs. According to the memoirs of Shakib Arslan, after Cemal lost his popularity, it was easy for the Arab deputies to have a decision issued to the cabinet in favor of the exiled Arabs in Anatolia.¹⁸⁵ In this regard, first of all, Shakib Arslan, in an agreement with Talat Pasha, blocked the plan to exchange the Syrian property of the Arab exiles with property in Anatolia. According to Arslan, the question of the return of the Arab exiles was put on the agenda of the cabinet at the end of 1916. However, it was decided that as long as Cemal Pasha ruled Syria their return was impossible. Afterwards, Midhat Şükrü Bey was sent to Cemal Pasha following the second Ottoman victory in Gaza to persuade him regarding the return of the exiles, but his efforts were unsuccessful.¹⁸⁶

When Cemal Pasha's army was defeated in Jerusalem by the British troops and he returned to İstanbul, the tide turned to the advantage of the Arab exiles in Anatolia. The government considered appeasing the Arabs, presumably to prevent Syrians from assisting the British troops or sympathizing

with the sharif. Consequently, first, exiles younger than 16 and older than 60 were allowed to return to their homes in February 1918.¹⁸⁷ By March 1918, upon the request of Governor Tahsin Bey and the new army commander, Mersinli Cemal Pasha, the Porte issued a decision allowing the return of all the exiles except the dragomans of the enemy states.¹⁸⁸ In May 1918, a general amnesty was proclaimed by the cabinet for all the Arab exiles, allowing them to return to their homes.¹⁸⁹

Negotiations with Sharif Hussein and Faysal for peace

Toward the end of the year 1917, a second attempt was made to end the hostilities between the Ottomans and the sharif. The process began with the desertion of Amir Abd al-Qadir al-Jazairi to Sharif Hussein's side.¹⁹⁰ He was the son of the ex-vice-president of the Ottoman Parliament, who had been sent into exile to Smyrna by Cemal Pasha.¹⁹¹ After a while, Abd al-Qadir wrote a letter to Cemal Pasha informing him that he no longer supported the sharif and would like to take refuge in the Ottoman Empire to serve it on condition that his life was guaranteed. According to Austrian consul in Damascus, his conditions were accepted immediately. When he arrived in Damascus in November 1917,¹⁹² he brought with him plenty of gold supplied by the British authorities to provoke a revolt among the Druze of Hauran. He declared that he wanted to serve the Ottoman government in return for the pardoning of the exiled members of his family. His exiled father, Ali Pasha al-Jazairi, and his interned relative, Tahir al-Jazairi, were allowed to return home. He proposed to give the British gold to the government, but he was allowed to keep it as a reward. Also following Amir Abd al-Qadir's advice, a general amnesty was issued for individuals who had joined the sharif's revolt on the condition that they surrendered within 35 days of the announcement of the amnesty. Shukri Pasha al-Ayyubi was also pardoned.¹⁹³

The remarks of Governor Tahsin Bey regarding the escape of Abd al-Qadir demonstrate the sentiments of most of the exiled Arabists in regard to their allegiance to the Ottoman state:

Abd al-Qadir has sent me a message from the village where he was hidden. [He] asked for a meeting. I gave quarter to him and accepted his appeal. He explained at some length that ... he was given money [by the British officials] to provoke a revolt in Damascus and its surrounding, and that his religious sentiments were aggrieved ... He expounded weepingly that he was ready to execute all orders beneficial to the government [*hükümet lehine teklif edilen her türlü emri ifaya amade olduğunu ağlayarak söyledi*]. Following that, he has met with his excellency the Commander Pasha [Cemal Pasha]. The mentioned [*müşarünileyh*] [Commander], too, approved his appeal ... I observe that [he can be] trusted. In any case, I hope some benefit and service will accrue from that man ... Abd al-Qadir is in our hands and serves us secretly.¹⁹⁴

Subsequently, Cemal charged another member of the al-Jazairi family, Amir Said, to go to Mecca on behalf of the Ottoman government to negotiate with the sharif and to guarantee that the sharif and his supporters would be forgiven by the Ottoman sultan. He also wrote letters to Sharif Hussein, Faysal, and the other leaders of the revolt emphasizing the necessity of the unity of all Muslims against Great Britain, which had always attacked and would continue to attack Islam.¹⁹⁵ The prominent scholars of Syria, Sheikh Kitani and Sheikh Bedreddin, also wrote letters to Sharif Hussein.¹⁹⁶ After that Cemal resigned from his office in Syria and the correspondence was maintained by Mersinli Cemal Pasha, Cemal's successor, and Tahsin Bey, the governor of Syria.

The answer to Cemal arrived from Faysal on January 26, 1918. He placed all his cards on the table openly. His demands were not principally different from those voiced by the Arabists before the war. Faysal wrote as if he were the spokesman of the Arabist movement, whose leadership was destroyed by Cemal's executions. First of all, he expressed the fundamental loyalty of the sharif to the caliphate and the sultanate. He then explained that the sharif had to rebel against the state because of Cemal's activities and listed his demands for a peace treaty. His first condition was that "each nation [Turks and Arabs] should know their rights. None of them should intervene in the rights and issues of the other. Both [nations] should strive in a body. In this way, a true unity of Islam should be created." He added that the Arabs were afraid of the Turks and mistrusted them. If the agreement were made, then the conduct of the war would be changed. The vendetta between the two nations would end and the Ottoman Empire would rule from West Africa to Eastern Asia.¹⁹⁷ In his note to Cemal, Tahsin Bey specifically requested that he continue the negotiations so as not to spoil (*heba etmek*) Syria.¹⁹⁸

Upon Tahsin's request for instructions, Talat allowed him to maintain the correspondence "without making any commitment." He hoped to at least win over Faysal in this process.¹⁹⁹ According to the German ambassador, Talat was willing to give a certain amount of autonomy to the Arabs. He was aware of the impossibility of recapturing the lost Arab territories by military means and wanted to regain them diplomatically. But a clique led by Cemal strongly and unreasonably opposed this project and did not give consent for even the slightest concession.²⁰⁰ Presumably due to this opposition, Talat ordered Tahsin to continue the correspondence "without making any commitment."²⁰¹ But he changed his reconciliatory attitude toward the end of the war and adopted the same attitude as Cemal.²⁰²

In May 1918, Tahsin Bey and Mersinli Cemal sent Shukri Pasha al-Ayyubi to Faysal in Salt to determine a place for negotiations. They would negotiate with Faysal in full authority on condition that the latter would abandon the idea of independence.²⁰³ However, according to the German consul in Beirut, the sharif's side did not trust the promises of the CUP leaders.²⁰⁴ Indeed, the Ottoman authorities in Istanbul were quite reluctant to negotiate with the sharif and to make concessions to him. They were optimistic about the

outcome of the war and believed that they could appoint, sooner or later, Ali Haidar as the *amir* of Mecca.²⁰⁵

In spite of this mutual distrust, the correspondence continued until the end of the war. Faysal wanted a status for Arabia similar to that of the province of Bayern in Germany.²⁰⁶ The Germans opposed the attitude of the CUP leaders, and, toward the end of the war, repeatedly expressed the need for an agreement with the sharif to enable the transfer of troops to the Persian front.²⁰⁷ In the same direction, the prominent ideologue of the Young Turks, Ziya Gökalp, advised Talat to reorganize the Ottoman Empire similarly to the Austrian-Hungary Empire, giving autonomy to the Arabs.²⁰⁸ However, the Unionist leaders preferred to avoid "making any promise that would imply independence,"²⁰⁹ and to stall the sharif until his absolute defeat in Syria. As a final remark, it is noteworthy that, immediately after the ceasefire agreement, the negotiations between the Turks and Arabs were restarted.²¹⁰

During his governorate in Syria, Cemal's policy toward the Arabist movement aimed at the abolition of a mediating layer between the state and its citizens in Syria as well as the elimination of elements that were perceived as "disloyal" and could be used by the Great Powers in the future as tools to create problems for Ottoman sovereignty in Syria. However, since the reasons behind the outbreak of the sharifian revolt in Mecca were attributed to his draconian rule in Syria, that event created a turning point in the state's Arabist policies; his policies were blocked with the intervention of the central government in favor of the Arabists and Arabs. Thus, his projects, beginning at the end of 1916, were withdrawn after it became apparent that the sharifian revolt could not be suppressed by military means.

Notes

- 1 Although some Arabs claimed in their memoirs that the real aim of the movement was to obtain the independence of the Arab provinces from the Ottoman Empire (for an example, see: Yusuf al-Hakim, *Bayrut wa Lubnan fi Ahd al-Uthmani*, Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li al-Nashr, 1980, pp. 116–117), the studies that will be evaluated below show that the Arabist movement, to a large extent, did not demand independence from the empire until the last moments of Ottoman rule.
- 2 For some studies treating Arab nationalism as a movement seeking independence from the Ottoman Empire, see, George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement*, Harbor: Simon Publications, 2001; Kadri Kal'acı, *Al-Thawrat al-Arabiyya al-Qubra*, Beirut: Shariqat al-Matbuatu li al-Tawzi' wa al-Nashr, 1994.; for similar evaluations, see: Sulayman Mousa, *Husayn bin Ali wa al-Thawrat al-Arabiyya al-Qubra*, Amman: Lajnatu Tarikh al-Urdun, 1992; for some revisionist studies on the historical development of the Arab nationalism, see: Ernst Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism; Essays on the Origin of the Arab Nationalism*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973; Rashid Khalidi, Lisa Anderson, Muhammad Muslih, and Reeva S. Simon (eds.), *The Origins of the Arab Nationalism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1991; James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni (eds.), *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997; Derek Hopwood (ed.), *Arab Nation Arab Nationalism*, London: Macmillan Press, 2000.

- 3 The only exception in English is Hasan Kayalı's study examining the relations between the Arabists and the Young Turks in the second constitutional period. However, he gives very little attention to the policies of Cemal Pasha in Syria: Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*. There are two studies in Turkish including information on Cemal Pasha's policy regarding Arabism. The first is Şaban Ortak's study on the exiles from Syria to Anatolia. This study, however, rarely tries to analyze the principles, impact, and consequences of Cemal's policy. Rather, it gives the reader the impression that it simply classifies the documents available in the Ottoman Archives regarding the topic: Şaban Ortak, *Osmanlı'nın Son Manevralarından Suriye ve Garbi Arabistan Tehciri*, Ankara: Pegem Akademi, 2011; Nevzat Artuç also devoted a short section to the subject in his book. The chapter, to a large extent, is made up of a repeat of Cemal's claims in his memoirs. The writer implies throughout the section that he is defending what Cemal did regarding the Arabists. Moreover, there are significant factual errors in the book. The writer interprets Cemal Pasha's letters to the Bedouin tribes and Imam Yahya inviting them to work together in close cooperation to his conciliatory politics regarding the Arabists (p. 300). The remarks in the book on these tribal leaders give the impression that the writer sees those chiefs as members of the Arabist movement. Similarly, Artuç claims that Cemal used the documents seized from the French consulates following the first hangings in August 1915. Yet, as will be demonstrated below, he demanded these documents in May 1915, and the first executions were carried out on the basis of the evidence available in those documents (p. 306): Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*.
- 4 Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, p. 85.
- 5 TNA, FO 195/2337, British Vice-Consulate to the British Ambassador in Constantinople, Adana, 27 August 1910.
- 6 The records of the congress were published in Cairo in the same year. For details, see: *Al-Mu'tamar al-Arabiyya al-Awwal*, Cairo: 1331-1913.
- 7 For the details of the process, see: Salaam, *Mudhakkiratu Salim Ali Salam*, pp. 168-190; Afterwards, the Arab nationalist considered this congress as the first step toward Arab independence. For an example, see: Al-Hakim, Yusuf, *Bayrut wa Lubnan fi Ahd al-Uthmani*, Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li al-Nashr, 1980, pp. 117-118.
- 8 For the text of the agreement, see: *Majallat al-Manar*, Vol. 16, No. 8, 2 August 1913, pp. 638-640. In the high schools, the language of instruction was presumably Arabic. We know that the Imperial High School in Damascus taught in Arabic until March 1916: HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 21 March 1916.
- 9 The prominent members of the pro-Ottoman party, like Abd al-Rahman al-Yusuf, Sheikh Asad al-Shukayri, and Shakib Arslan, were among the members of the delegation: Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 108; According to memoirs of Salim Ali Salaam, the Unionists aimed at a mutual meeting consisting of the members of the reformist and the pro-Ottoman Arabs. However, due to the coincidence of the date of the meeting with the date of the departure of the reform party members, this meeting could not be held: Salaam, *Mudhakkiratu*, p. 184-85.
- 10 BOA, BEO 4223/316719, Sadaret to Maarif, 6 Teşrin-i Evvel 1329 (19 October 1913).
- 11 BOA, MF.MKT, 1190/74, The high-commissary in Egypt to Ministry of Interior, 1 Teşrin-i Sani 1913 (14 November 1913).
- 12 BOA, MF.MKT, 1190/74, Ministry of Interior to the Commission for the Arabic Education, 23 Teşrin-i Sani 1913 (6 December 1913).
- 13 BOA, MF.MKT, 1190/74, The chair of the Commission for the Arabic Education to Ministry of Education, 2 Kanun-ı Evvel 1329 (15 December 1913).
- 14 BOA, MF.MKT, 1190/59, Ministry of Education to the Governorates of Syria and Beirut, 24 Eylül 1329 (7 October 1913).

- 15 In a telegram, the Ministry of Interior advised the Directorate General of Security to appoint Arabic speakers to the Arab provinces. For details, see: BOA, DH.MTV 60/19, Ministry of Interior to the Directorate General of Security, 18 Mart 1330 (30 March 1914).
- 16 BOA, DH.MTV 49-2/43, Ministry of Interior to the governorate of Jerusalem, 7 Kanun-ı Sani 1329 (20 January 1913).
- 17 BOA, DH.İ.U.M 67/23, Ministry of Interior to Undersecretary, 9 Teşrin-i Sani 1329 (22 December 1913).
- 18 Mahmud Nedim Bey, *Arabistan'da Bir Ömür*, Ali Birinci (ed.), İstanbul: ISIS Press, 2001, p. 178.
- 19 BOA, DH.EUM 4.Şb 10/18, 13 Mart 1330 (26 March 1914); a transcript of this document has been published in Ortak's book, in spite of some reading faults. For example, he transcribed "satvet" (power) as "sukut" (silence), and some unread words. The text published by Ortak did not follow the original order of the document: Ortak, *Suriye ve Garbi Arabistan Tehciri*, pp. 241-245.
- 20 BOA, DH.EUM 4.Şb 10/18, 13 Mart 1330 (26 March 1914).
- 21 BOA, DH.EUM 4.Şb 23/4, 22 Temmuz 1330 (4 August 1914).
- 22 Ahmed Şerif, "Türk-Arab," Damascus, 12 December 1910, in *Arnavudluk'da, Suriye'de, Trablusgarb'de Tanin*, Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 1999, pp. 126-129.
- 23 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, pp. 198-199.
- 24 BOA, DH.ŞFR 482/127, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 25 Temmuz 1331 (7 August 1915).
- 25 BOA, DH.ŞFR 471/47, Cemal to Talat, 3 Mayıs 1331 (16 May 1915), Jerusalem.
- 26 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, pp. 206-7
- 27 BOA, DH.ŞFR 471/47, Cemal to Talat, 3 Mayıs 1331 (16 May 1915).
- 28 For a study on the political and religious views of Abd al-Hamid Zahrawi, see: Christoph Herzog, "Abd al-Hamid az-Zahrawi und das Problem des Osmanismus, 1908-1916," Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität zu Freiburg, Offenburg; Undated.
- 29 BOA, DH.ŞFR 483/75, Cemal to Talat, 28 Temmuz 1331 (10 August 1915).
- 30 HHStA, PA 38/366, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 25 August 1915.
- 31 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Hartmann to Legationssekretär von Wesendonk, 29 August 1915.
- 32 BOA, DH.ŞFR 483/75, Cemal to Talat, 28 Temmuz 1331 (10 August 1915).
- 33 Birgen, *İttihat ve Terakki'de On Sene*, p. 272.
- 34 Atay, *Zeytindağı*, p. 50.
- 35 Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, pp. 159-160.
- 36 Atay, *Zeytindağı*, p. 50.
- 37 In one of his telegrams, Enver reported to Cemal that there was no opposition to his activities in Syria among the prominent CUP members: TTK Arşivi, KO Koleksiyonu 10/5, Cemal to Enver, 4 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (17 December 1916).
- 38 These remarks in his memoirs show his confidence in the Arab population:

As I felt perfectly sure of the civil population, I had no hesitation whatever in committing the safety of the country to the Arab formations and leaving the coastal districts practically without surveillance. I am certain that if the English had had the slightest doubt about the loyalty of the civil population of Syria and Palestine they would certainly have attempted a landing.

Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 206; Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 178.

- 39 For example, Shakib Arslan puts this claim into words while evaluating the exile of the prominent Arab families to Anatolia: Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 156.
- 40 That date is determined in the memoirs of Amin Said: Said, *al-Thawrat al-Arabiyya al-Qubra*, p. 64.

- 41 The sentence is different in the Turkish version of the memoirs: *Türklük Cereyanı Arabluk Cereyanının katiyyen düşmanı değil*/Turkism is not an enemy of Arabism; Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 172.
- 42 Turkish Youth (*Türk Gençliği*) in the original; Cemal Paşa, *ibid.*, p. 172.
- 43 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, pp. 200–201; Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 172; the same speech is mentioned in the memoirs of Amin Said, Izzat Darwaza, and Ahmad Kadri: for details, see: Said, *al-Thawrat al-Arabiyya al-Qubra*, pp. 64–65; Kadri, *Mudhakkiratu*, p. 39; Darwaza, *Mudhakkiratu*, p. 223.
- 44 Rainer Hermann, *Kulturkrise und konservative Erneuerung: Muhammad Kurd Ali (1876–1953) und das geistige Leben in Damaskus zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989, pp. 113–124.
- 45 Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, pp. 104–105.
- 46 Once, he refused the offer of Shahbandar to communicate with Great Britain to bargain for the future of Syria: Kurd Ali, *ibid.*, p. 111; on another occasion, he refused an offer of assistance from the German consul for his newspaper *al-Muqtabas*: Kurd Ali, *ibid.*, p. 125. He writes that all these incidents were reported to Cemal Pasha.
- 47 When he refused the offer of cooperation from Baron Oppenheim, the latter complained to Cemal Pasha that Kurd Ali was pro-French and, therefore, should be hanged. As an opponent of Germany, Cemal assessed the complaint of Oppenheim as a sign of the reliability of Kurd Ali: Kurd Ali, *ibid.*, pp. 149–150.
- 48 Kurd Ali, *ibid.*, p. 111.
- 49 For the details of his trial process see: Salaam, *Mudhakkiratu*, pp. 210–223.
- 50 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 264.
- 51 TNA, FO 371/2781, Sykes to WO, 25 September 1916.
- 52 Amin Said, *al-Thawrat al-Arabiyya al-Qubra*, p. 64.
- 53 For the details of these plans, see: Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, pp. 111–112.
- 54 Salaam, *Mudhakkiratu*, pp. 204–205.
- 55 Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 168.
- 56 Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 111.
- 57 BOA, DH.\$FR 471/47, Cemal to Talat, 3 Mayıs 1331 (16 May 1915), Jerusalem.
- 58 BOA, DH.\$FR 483/75, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 28 Temmuz 1331 (11 August 1915).
- 59 BOA, DH.\$FR 485/8, Azmi to Talat, Beirut, 9 Ağustos 1915 (22 August 1915).
- 60 An Arabist opposition movement founded by Arab students in Istanbul. For detailed information, see: Eliezer Tauber, *The Emergence of the Arab Movements*, London: Frank Cass, 1993, pp. 101–109.
- 61 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 20 August 1915.
- 62 Tauber, *Emergence*, p. 101.
- 63 BOA, DH.\$FR 483/75, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 28 Temmuz 1331 (11 August 1915); BOA, DH.\$FR 482/127, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 25 Temmuz 1331 (7 August 1915).
- 64 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 26 August 1915.
- 65 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 20 August 1915.
- 66 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 6 August 1915.
- 67 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Hartmann to Legationssekretär of Wesendonk, 29 August 1915; for Cemal's report on the departure of the delegation, see: BOA, DH.\$FR 490/84, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 30 Ağustos 1331 (11 September 1915); BOA, DH.\$FR 491/18, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 14 Eylül 1331 (27 September 1915).
- 68 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 1 October 1915.
- 69 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 14 November 1915.
- 70 BOA, DH.\$FR 502/90, Asaf to Talat, 13 Kanun-ı Evvel 1331 (26 December 1915), Maan.

- 71 Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, pp. 152–153.
- 72 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 13, Müller to Wesendonk, 29 May 1916.
- 73 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 13, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 8 May 1916.
- 74 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 10 May 1916.
- 75 **BOA**, İ.DUİT 171/60, 1 Haziran 1332 (14 June 1916).
- 76 Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, pp. 275–276.
- 77 Erden, *ibid.*, pp. 273–274.
- 78 Hanioglu, *Preparation*, p. 211.
- 79 Karabekir, *I Dünya Savaşı Anıları*, p. 29.
- 80 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 13, Müller to Wesendonk, 29 May 1915.
- 81 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 13, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 8 May 1916.
- 82 For the origins of the documents, see: *Journal de Beyrouth*, 6 May 1916; for the Turkish translation, see: *Aliye Divan-ı Harb-i Örfisinde Tetkik Olunan Mesele-i Siyasiye Hakkında İzahat*, Dersaadet: Tanin Matbaası, 1332 (1916).
- 83 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 25 August 1915; Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 276.
- 84 Erden, *ibid.*, p. 276.
- 85 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 504/65, Cemal to Talat, 26 Kanun-ı Evvel 1331 (8 January 1916); in another telegram, he again warned Talat to order the governorates in Anatolia to act carefully in dealing with the Arab deportees: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 505/73, Cemal to Talat, 2 Kanun-ı Sani 1331 (15 January 1915).
- 86 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 504/65, Cemal to Talat, 26 Kanun-ı Evvel 1331 (8 January 1915).
- 87 Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, p. 193.
- 88 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 20 August 1915.
- 89 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 24 May 1916.
- 90 For some telegrams in this regard, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 9/29 Cemal to Talat, 5 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (18 December 1916); **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 6/43, Cemal to Talat, 25 Mayıs 1332 (7 June 1916).
- 91 Once, he refused the request that a child whose parents had died be allowed to return to Syria: **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 14/7, Cemal to Talat, 21 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333 (21 October 1917). He refused several requests for permission to return. For some example, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 9/10, Cemal to Talat, 23 Kanun-ı Sani 1332 (5 January 1917); **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 7/26, Talat to governors of Konya, Kastamonu, Sivas, Bursa, Ankara, 17 Temmuz 1332 (30 July 1916); **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 14/44, Ministry of War to Ministry of Interior, 27 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (10 December 1917).
- 92 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 10/5, Cemal to Enver, 4 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (17 December 1916).
- 93 Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 197.
- 94 Exile had been used as a method of settlement or punishment throughout Ottoman history. For a study on this subject, see: Kemal Daşcıoğlu, *Osmanlı'da Sürgün*, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2007.
- 95 Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 185; the contemporary accounts of the German and Austrian officials are also in the same vein. For some examples, see: **BA-MA**, RM 5/2321, Humann to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Constantinople, 30 January 1917; **HHStA**, PA 38/367, the Jerusalem Consul to Burian, Jerusalem, 7 June 1915; **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 27 May 1916; **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 30 March 1916.
- 96 Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, p. 194; similar remarks were made by the Austrian and German consuls in Syria. For some examples, see: **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 26 August 1915; **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 25 August 1915; Artuç also repeats similar claims, for details, see: Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, p. 298.

- 97 Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 251.
- 98 HHStA, PA 38/369, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 27 May 1916.
- 99 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 21 March 1916.
- 100 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 30 March 1916.
- 101 HHStA, PA 12/209, Pallavicini to Burian, Constantinople, 15 July 1915.
- 102 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 93.
- 103 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 18 April 1916.
- 104 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 8 May 1916. The same evaluations were made by another German official in 1918: PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, Aleppo, 26 June 1918.
- 105 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 18 April 1916.
- 106 For that reason, they avoided giving the sharif written assurances about the demands put forth by the latter. For some examples, see: TTK Arşivi, KO Koleksiyonu 1/70, Talat to Tahsin, 1 Şubat 1334 (1 February 1918); TTK Arşivi, KO Koleksiyonu 11/66, Enver to Cemal (Mersinli), 21 Ağustos 1334 (21 August 1918).
- 107 In the same telegram, he says that he spared their lives as an act of benevolence (*lütuf*) toward them: BOA, DH.ŞFR 559/31, Cemal to Talat, Aliye, 11 Temmuz 1333 (11 July 1917).
- 108 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, Constantinople, 26 June 1918.
- 109 BOA, DH.ŞFR 483/75, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 28 Temmuz 1331 (10 August 1915).
- 110 HHStA, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 9 October 1914.
- 111 PA-AA, Türkei 165, Bd. 41, "Die Arabische Frage," *Der Nahe Orient II*, 17 January 1917.
- 112 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 25 August 1915.
- 113 HHStA, PA 38/366, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 25 August 1915.
- 114 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus 10 December 1915.
- 115 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus 18 April 1916.
- 116 HHStA, PA 38/370, Kwatkowski to Czernin, Beirut, 16 March 1917.
- 117 HHStA, PA 12/211, Trauttmansdorff to Czernin, Constantinople, 14 April 1917.
- 118 HHStA, PA 38/370, Kwatkowski to Czernin, Beirut, 16 March 1917.
- 119 HHStA, PA 12/211, Trauttmansdorff to Czernin, Constantinople, 14 April 1917.
- 120 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, Constantinople, 26 June 1918.
- 121 TNA, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting a spy returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916.
- 122 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, Constantinople, 26 June 1918.
- 123 HHStA, PA 12/210, Pallavicini to Czernin, Constantinople, 30 December 1916.
- 124 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Mühlens to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 24 February 1917.
- 125 BA-MA, RM 5/2323, Grafen to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Constantinople, 26 February 1918.
- 126 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Mühlens to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 24 February 1917.
- 127 Cemal to Enver, 29 Eylül 1333 (27 September 1917), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri*, Ankara: ATASE Yayınları, 2007, p. 697: English translations of the text in the same book were, to a certain extent, consulted: *ibid.*, p. 328.
- 128 For an analysis of the centralization policies that began with Mahmud II, see: Hourani, "Ottoman Reform."
- 129 BOA, DH.ŞFR 483/75, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 28 Temmuz 1331 (11 August 1915).

- 130 For an analysis of the British approach to the Ottoman caliphate, see: Tufan Buzpinar, "The Question of Caliphate under the Ottoman Sultans," in *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration*, Itzhak Weismann and Fruma Zachs (eds.), London: I.B. Tauris, 2005, pp. 17–36.
- 131 However, the British side did not want to be seen as the protector of the Arab caliph, and sought to solve this question with the agreement of the Muslims: "any proposal as regards an Arab Khalifa should come from the Arabs themselves," TNA, FO 371/2480, Clayton to Grey, Cairo, 3 January 1915; for the discussions of the British officials regarding the issue of the Arab caliphate, see: TNA, FO 371/2482, Grey to McMahon, London, 14 April 1915; TNA, FO 371/2480, Holderness to FO, London, 15 January 1915. The French side expressed the opinion that the new caliph should not have paved the way for the passion for a strong caliph among the Muslims and should not have provoked the sentiment of unity among them: MAEE, Guerre 1914–18, 868/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Deffrance to MAE, Cairo, 15 March 1915. For a study on the negotiations between Sharif Hussein and the Kemalist leaders regarding transfer of the caliphate to the Arabs, see: Joshua Teitelbaum, "'Taking Back' the Caliphate: Sharif Husayn Ibn Ali, Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman Caliphate," *Die Welt des Islams*, Vol. 40, No. 3, November 2000, pp. 412–424.
- 132 For a study on the Ottoman policy of pan-Islamism toward Indian Muslims beginning with Abdulhamid II, see: Azmi Özcan, *Panislamism: The Ottomans and Britain (1877–1924)*, Leiden: Brill, 1997.
- 133 Max Roloff stated in his book that the aim of the Turks in World War I was to found a caliphate state. To that aim, they excited the national sentiments of the Muslim peoples against the common enemy: Max Roloff, *Arabien und Seine Bedeutung für die Erstarkung des Osmanenreiches*, Leipzig: Veit, 1915, p. 6; for a study on German and Ottoman pan-Islamist propaganda in World War I, see: Lüdke Tilman, *Jihad Made in Germany*, Münster: LIT Verlag, 2005.
- 134 A movement in Syria against the Ottoman caliph would terminate the policy of pan-Islamism. A French report proposed provoking a revolt in Syria to remove the pan-Islamist danger: MAEE, Guerre 1914–18, 867/Tuquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Deffrance, Alexandria, 31 December 1914.
- 135 For some examples, see: Babanzade Ahmed Naim, *İslam'da Dava-yı Kavmiyet*, İstanbul: Tevsi-i Tibaat Matbaası, 1332; Halil Halid Bey, *Türk ve Arap*, M. Ertuğrul Düzdag (ed.), İstanbul: Yeni Zamanlar Matbaası, 2005; Said Halim Paşa, *İslamlaşmak*, İstanbul: Hukuk Matbaası, 1337.
- 136 It was difficult for this club to act freely in the pre-war period since the French and British consuls opposed it. After the outbreak of the war, the members of the club felt themselves free in their actions: HHStA, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 9 October 1914.
- 137 "They provoked the nationalist movement in Egypt and, by this way, wanted to fish in muddy waters." HHStA, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 9 October 1914; in response to that argument, the British side claimed in their pamphlets that their hostility was not directed at the Arabs, but Germany and its allies: TNA, FO 371/2486, Grey to India Office, London, 19 June 1915.
- 138 For some propaganda pamphlets and brochures with these themes throughout the war, see: Gottfried Hagen, *Die Türkei im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990, pp. 185, 198–199, 204–207, 210–213.
- 139 HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 10 August 1915.
- 140 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 51.
- 141 Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, pp. 290–291; Kurd Ali writes in his memoirs that Cemal warned him to avoid Oppenheim, stating that he was a very dangerous man: Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 147.
- 142 Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 107.

- 143 Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, pp. 290–291; in the same place, Artuç claims that there were two separate newspapers established by Cemal in Syria called *al-Sharq* and *al-Islam*. The editor of *al-Sharq*, Shakib Arslan refers in his memoirs only to *al-Sharq* newspaper. He never mentions *al-Islam*: Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, pp. 169–170; another writer of *al-Sharq*, Kurd Ali, gives the name of the newspaper, which was intended by Oppenheim to be published as *al-Sharq*. He also did not mention *al-Islam*. Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 149. All these remarks make it obvious that, in the beginning, the newspaper was to be published with the name of *al-Islam*, but that later the name was changed to *al-Sharq*.
- 144 BOA, DH.ŞFR 517/17, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 9 Nisan 1332 (22 April 1916).
- 145 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 1 May 1916.
- 146 ATASE Arşivi, Kls. 531, Ds. 2078, Fih. 2–15, 2–29, in Umar, Ömer Osman, "Cemal Paşa'nın Suriye'de Arap Milliyetçilerine Karşı Neşrettiği El-İslam Gazetesi ve Programı," *Askeri Tarih Bülteni*, Vol. 49, 2000, pp. 133–134.
- 147 Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 170.
- 148 For some examples, see: *al-Sharq*, "al-Sharif al-Husayn," 22 Eylül 1333, No. 431, p. 1; *al-Sharq*, "al-Usatu al-Hâlikün," No. 459, 29 Tashrin-i Awwal 1333 (29 September 1917).
- 149 For some examples, see: *al-Sharq*, "al-Khadifu'l-Kazib," 17 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 449, p. 1; *al-Sharq*, "Fazayih fi Mısır," 20 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 450, p. 1.
- 150 For some examples, see: *al-Sharq*, "Almaniya wa Uthmaniyyun-I," 11 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 444, p. 1; *al-Sharq*, "Almaniya wa Uthmaniyyun-II," 15 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 447, p. 1; *al-Sharq*, "Dzifu'l-Khilafe," 17 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 450, p. 1; *al-Sharq*, "Almaniya wa Uthmaniyyun-III," 21 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 452, p. 1;
- 151 For an example, see: *al-Sharq*, "Sahafiyyun wa Almanya," 1 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 436, p. 1.
- 152 For some examples, see: *al-Sharq*, "Tasrihatu Hadrati Cemal Pasha," 8 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 440, p. 1; *al-Sharq*, "Cevabu Sahibu'l-Hashmeti Ahidu'l-Almaniya ala Tahdiyyati Dawlati Cemal Pasha," 22 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 453, p. 1; *al-Sharq*, "Bahriyyatuna wa Naziruha," 27 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333, No. 457, p. 1.
- 153 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 December 1916.
- 154 HHStA, PA 38/370, Kwatkowski to Czernin, Beirut, 16 March 1917.
- 155 For some studies on the sharifian revolt, see: Teitelbaum, "Taking Back the Caliphate"; Aryeh Shumuelevitz and Asher Susser (eds.), *Hashemites in the Modern Arab World*, London: Routledge, 1996; Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism*.
- 156 Cemal says regarding the sharif's movement: "I could never have conceived that in a war, upon which the fate of the Khalifate depended, he would ally himself with the States which desired to thrust the Slav yoke upon the whole Mohammedan world." Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 211. The German consul in Damascus advises the German consul in January 1916 to take the rumors about the sharif with a grain of salt, since those rumours aimed at driving a wedge between the Ottoman state and Sharif Hussein: PA-AA, Türkei 165, Bd. 38, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting consul Damascus), Constantinople, 22 January 1916. A report of the Austrian consul in Damascus written to the Germans in April 1915 described the sharif as the true supporter of the caliph: PA-AA, Türkei 165, Bd. 37, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 10 April 1915.; The Austrian consul in Damascus states that keeping Faysal in Damascus as a "hostage" provided insurance to the Ottoman authorities with regard to the attitude of the sharif: HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 September 1916.
- 157 According to Aziz Al-Azmeh, the two movements were so different that the sharif's revolt "ought to be excised from the chronicles of Arab nationalism. It was Arab only in the narrow ethnological, pre-nationalist sense." See: Aziz

- Al-Azmeh, "Nationalism and the Arabs," in Hopwood, *Arab Nation*, p. 69; for a detailed discussion of the same argument, see: Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism*.
- 158 In a conversation with a German official, Salih Sharif al-Senussi interpreted the revolt as a consequence of the unskillful policy of Cemal Pasha: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Weber to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 7 August 1916. Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, an old *sadrâzam*, thought similar to Senussi. He told a German official in Vienna that the sharif rebelled against the Ottoman government because of the actions of Cemal Pasha toward the Arabs: **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 38, Tschirschky to Jagow, Vienna, 6 July 1916. The approaches of the German officials were no different and a German official in Constantinople attributed the sharif's rebellion to the same causes: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 25 April 1917. The ex-khedive of Egypt was not different than them: **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 39, Jacoby to Bethmann-Hollweg, Bern, 27 July 1916.
- 159 The other individuals arrested were as follows: Faris al-Khoury, the deputy of Damascus, Abd al-Hamid Pasha, the former brigadier general and the former official for the administration of the imperial domains: **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 20 December 1916.
- 160 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 10 April 1917. A German official asserted that the implementation of those death penalties would increase the passive resistance of the Syrians against the decisions of the government, the value of paper money would decrease further, the desertions and espionage to the Entente would increase, cohabitation of Turks and Arabs would be more difficult, and the sympathies of the Syrians toward Sharif Hussein, seeing him as their savior from Turkish tyranny, would grow stronger: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Zimmermann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 14 February 1917.
- 161 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 534/1, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 18 Eylül 1332 (1 October 1916).
- 162 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Zimmermann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 14 February 1917.
- 163 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 10 April 1917.
- 164 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Zimmermann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 14 February 1917.
- 165 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, pp. 129–130.
- 166 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 40, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 12 October 1916.
- 167 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Zimmermann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 14 February 1917.
- 168 A report of the Austrian consul demonstrates that the sharif was not far from this possibility of establishing an alliance with the members of the decentralization party in Egypt: **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 September 1916.
- 169 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 40, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting Hoffmann), Beirut, 12 October 1916. The sharif also struck a blow to Ottoman propaganda in the international area. In an interview given by him to the French newspaper *Le Temps*, he argued that the Jihad that had been dictated by the Germans to the Şeyhülislam in Istanbul should be directed against the Turks, who were loyal to the Germans, rather than the Entente. Therefore, he must be publicly condemned as soon as possible: **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 40, Funkdienst (The Radio Service) Lyon, "Die Unabhängigkeit der Araber," Lyon, 30 September 1916.
- 170 The *fatwa* was signed by *muftis* from various towns in Syria. They were as follows: 1) the *mufti* of Jerusalem: Kamil Husseini, 2) the *mufti* of Shafiite in

- Jerusalem: Tahir Abu Saud, 3) the *mufti* of Damascus: Abulsher Abedin, 4) the former *mufti* of Damascus: Suleiman Djuhadar, 5) the *mufti* of the Malekite of Damascus: Abd al-Baki el-Hassani, 6) the former *mufti* of Damascus: Salih Katana, 7) the *mufti* of Shafiite in Damascus: Tawfiq al-Razzi, 8) the *mufti* of Hanbalite in Damascus: Tawfiq Sujuthi, 9) the *mufti* of Aleppo: Muhammad al-Abisi, 10) the *mufti* of Beirut: Mustafa Nedja, 11) the *mufti* of Hama: Badraddin al-Kailani, 12) the *mufti* of Tripoli (Syria): Abd al-Hamid Qeram, 13) the *mufti* of Acre: Abdullah al-Djezzar, 14) the *mufti* of Nablus: Menib Hashim. **HHStA**, 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 29 September 1916.
- 171 **HHStA**, 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 29 September 1916.
- 172 **BA-MA**, RM 5/2321, Humann to the Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, 30 January 1917.
- 173 For a while, Cemal wanted to show the results of his activities toward the development of Syria to the authors in Istanbul. For a telegram in this regard, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 515/16, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 16 Mart 1332 (29 March 1916).
- 174 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 538/11, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 8 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (21 November 1916).
- 175 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 14 November 1916.
- 176 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 538/11, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 8 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (21 November 1916).
- 177 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 14 November 1916.
- 178 For a report on the impact of Cemal's draconian policies on the evolution of the attitude of Syrians toward the sharif and Great Britain, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 25 April 1917.
- 179 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 41, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 31 January 1917.
- 180 **HHStA**, PA 12/210, Trauttmansdorff to Czernin, Constantinople, 27 January 1917; **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 41, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 31 January 1917. According to Cemal's memoirs, in the beginning of 1916 the sharif demanded similar privileges from the Ottoman Empire. For details, see: Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 215.
- 181 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Mühlens to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 24 February 1917.
- 182 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 20 February 1917.
- 183 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 41, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting Von Kress), Constantinople, 23 February 1917.
- 184 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 41, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting Von Kress), Constantinople, 4 March 1917.
- 185 Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, pp. 202–205.
- 186 Arslan, *ibid.*, pp. 190–197.
- 187 **BOA**, DH.EUM 19/11, 28 Şubat 1334 (28 February 1918).
- 188 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 15 March 1918; for some examples, see: **BOA**, İ.DUİT 105/42, 4 Mayıs 1334 (4 May 1918); İDUİT 106/40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48.
- 189 **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 19/55, Talat to Tahsin, 12 Mayıs 1334 (12 May 1918).
- 190 In the report of the Austrian consul, his name was given as Abd al-Qadir: **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 26 November 1917; in a report sent by Enver Pasha while he was in Damascus, the name was given as Said al-Jazairi: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu, 1/7, Enver to Talat, Damascus, 16 November 1917. However, Tahsin Bey notes the name as Abd al-Qadir: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 572/23, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 24 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (24 November 1917).

- 191 Before his escape to the sharif, he wrote some letters to Cemal Pasha expressing his loyalty and the loyalty of his family to the state: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 9/141, Emir Said to Cemal, 6 Nisan 1332 (18 April 1916); Cemal answered them through Enver that as a demonstration of condescension he spared their lives and exiled them to Brussa. If they insisted in their undertakings to return, Cemal would arrest them in their place of exile and would hang them following a "judgment" by the court martial. He stated that their relations with Syria were cut forever: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 13/54, Cemal to Enver, 27 Nisan 1333 (27 April 1917).
- 192 In Enver's report bearing the date 16 November 1917, he wrote of the arrival of Amir Said: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu, 1/7, Enver to Talat, Damascus, 16 November 1917.
- 193 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 26 November 1917. Most of this information was also stated by Cemal himself: **TTK Arşivi**, 7/126, Cemal to Enver, 20 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (20 November 1917).
- 194 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 572/23, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 24 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (24 November 1917).
- 195 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu, 1/7, Enver to Talat, Damascus, 16 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (16 November 1917).
- 196 **TTK Arşivi**, 7/126, Cemal to Enver, 20 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (20 November 1917).
- 197 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Arşivi 1/70, Faysal to Cemal, 26 Kanun-ı Sani 1334 (26 January 1918).
- 198 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Arşivi 1/70, Tahsin to Cemal, 26 Kanun-ı Sani 1334 (26 January 1918). Examining this correspondence with the materials in the British National Archives, Eliezer Tauber concludes that at the end of these negotiations he replied to Cemal that the "sword was arbiter between them" and cut the negotiations. He did not analyze the changing trend of Ottoman policy of Arabs beginning at the end of the year 1916: Tauber, *Emergence*, p. 154. However, the Ottoman correspondence revealed in this study shows that he was, indeed, quite willing to make a separate peace with the Ottoman authorities. Another reality revealed by the comparison of Tauber's information with the Ottoman documents is that Faysal did not keep the British officials informed about the negotiations.
- 199 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Arşivi 1/70, Talat to Cemal, 1 Şubat 1334 (1 February 1918).
- 200 In the same telegram, the ambassador states that, as an indication of this intolerance, Cemal tried to prohibit an organization of the Egyptians when he was deputized as the Minister of Interior in Talat's absence. They wanted to celebrate the anniversary of Khedive Abbas Hilmi's accession to the Egyptian throne. Cemal tried to make them abandon this organization, but they insisted on their program. Furthermore, he prohibited playing the Egyptian anthem, arguing that there was no Egyptian anthem, only the Turkish one: **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 42, Bernstoff to AA, Constantinople, 19 January 1918.
- 201 This time, Faysal notified British officials of his negotiations. However, it seems that he conveyed his demands to them in with considerable exaggeration. Tauber evaluates this correspondence as different attempts instead of seeing them as part of the same process. Faysal's real intention is not reflected in Tauber's study. For details, see: Tauber, *Emergence*, pp. 155–156.
- 202 For the details of this attitude, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 43, Bernstoff to AA, Constantinople, 30 August 1918.
- 203 Quite the reverse, Faysal did not demand independence: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 13/12, Tahsin to Enver, Damascus, 11 Mayıs 1334 (11 May 1918).
- 204 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 12, Bernstoff to Hertling (transmitting consul Beirut), Constantinople, 19 July 1918.
- 205 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 42, Oppenheim to AA, 28 July 1918. Quite the reverse of this attitude, Tauber implies in his book that the CUP leaders were very eager to agree with Faysal. Tauber, *Emergence*, p. 155.

- 206 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 43, Von Seeckt to AA, 4 September 1918.
- 207 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 43, Hintze to AA, 13 September 1918; **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 43, Berckheim to AA (transmitting Ludendorf), Constantinople, 1 September 1918; **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 43, Berckheim to AA (transmitting Oppenheim), Constantinople, 22 August 1918; **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 43, Bernstoff to AA, Constantinople, 30 August 1918; **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 6/91, Liman von Sanders to Enver, 1 June 1918.
- 208 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 43, Bernstoff to AA, Constantinople, 30 August 1918.
- 209 **TTK**, KO Koleksiyonu 6/90, Enver to Mersinli Cemal, 11 Ağustos 1334 (11 August 1918).
- 210 For a study on the negotiations after that time, see: M. Talha Çiçek, "Osmanlıcılık İdeolojisi ve Osmanlı Hakimiyeti Sonrası Türk-Arap İlişkilerinde Değişim ve Süreklilik," *Divan Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, Vol. 17, No. 33, 2012, pp. 173–192.

2 Assertion of state authority over secondary, local, and autonomous structures

Zionists, Christian clergy and Mutasarrifiyya in Lebanon

Prior to World War I, mainly due to the protection rights of the Great Powers stemming from the capitulations and the balance of forces in Ottoman politics, a number of de facto autonomous communities had been created by the different components of Ottoman society in Syria. Before the increase of Western influence, those rights had been provided by the Ottoman *millet* system.¹ However, in the modern era Western intervention played a significant role in the protection of the privileges of non-Muslim communities. Consequently, among those communities a certain sympathy toward these European powers emerged and Ottoman authority was considerably weakened, especially over non-Muslims, as in the case of some sections of the Jewish and Christian communities. The Christian clergy and internal Jewish organizations motivated by Zionism had gained substantial independence from state control and the ability to “conduct the conduct” of their communities. For that reason, the existence of such structures that were resistant to the effective control of the government created a barrier between the state and the people living under its rule, preventing the diffusion and penetration of the state in geographical Syria. By the outbreak of the war, from Cemal’s perspective, the administrative organization of the Zionist movement within Jewish society in Palestine and the position of the Christian clergy for the Christians, especially those of the Maronites, constituted such an obstacle.

Furthermore, the government in Lebanon was another autonomous body, largely free from Ottoman control, administratively. It had been established and guaranteed by the Great Powers following the incidents of 1860.² Quite the reverse of the Unionist idea of a unitary state, the Lebanese government had its own administrative organs, gendarmerie, and tax collection system within the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. As will be indicated below, all of these, in the eyes of Cemal, were interlayers that had to be eliminated or checked for the proper establishment of state control in Syria, similar to the case of Arabism. In this chapter, the analysis will focus on how Cemal Pasha intended to limit the authority of these autonomous bodies and increase the control of the Ottoman government among the different peoples living in its lands, and on the extent to which he succeeded in the elimination of these structures and the shaping of the behavior of the citizens living under them.

Cemal Pasha, the Jews, and the Zionist movement

Before an analysis of Cemal's policy regarding Zionism, an assessment of the existing literature will help contextualize the issue. Historical studies on Zionism and the emergence of Israel constitute an enormous body of literature. The historians of this movement have examined the particulars of its history in great detail. Today, the relations between the Zionists and the Western Great Powers are well known.³ Similarly, the emergence of the movement has been examined in a detailed way together with its historical development in different eras and in different states.⁴ Furthermore, the relations between the various communities of Palestine under Ottoman rule have been studied by the scholars of the area.⁵ However, the reaction of the Ottoman authorities to Zionist activities in Palestine as a nationalist movement aimed at the creation of a Jewish home in the Ottoman realm has still not been examined sufficiently, and particularly not with reference to Ottoman documents. In this sense, Fuat Dündar's study on the CUP's policy of settlement is an exception. But, as will be detailed below, his approach fails to contextualize Cemal's policy on Zionism and to explain the aims of his presence in Syria. Moreover, he does not seem to attribute any importance to the differences in the attitudes of the CUP leaders toward the question of Zionism.⁶

In contrast to the focus of the existing literature, this chapter sets out to describe how the most powerful Ottoman authority in Palestine, that is, Cemal Pasha, reacted to the Zionists there during World War I in the context of his general policy regarding the integration of the Syrian provinces within the imperial body of the Ottoman state by eliminating or checking mediating social layers. First of all, the analysis will concentrate on Cemal's opinions of the Zionist movement for a better understanding of the background of his actions. It will then proceed to a detailed analysis of the activities of Cemal Pasha and his bureaucrats against Zionism with the aim of integrating the imperial lands.

The Zionist movement, beginning from its foundation by Theodor Herzl with the Basel Congress, aimed at the acquisition in Palestine of a publicly secured and legally assured home for the Jewish people.⁷ Shortly after its establishment, the movement opened branches in Germany, Great Britain, and America and gained the sympathies of the magnates of the Jewish societies in these countries. In the beginning, the headquarters of the organization was in Vienna, but afterwards, in 1911, it was transferred to Berlin, which would play an important role in Zionist affairs during the war.⁸ At the same time, the Zionists began to organize the Jewish population all over the world for immigration to Palestine. With that aim, in 1908, the organization established a Palestine office in Jaffa, placed under the direction of Dr. Arthur Ruppin, an economist who had specialized in questions of Jewish sociology.⁹ The Jewish settlers who immigrated to Palestine with the help of the Zionists were organized into autonomous agricultural colonies. As described by Alexander

Aaronsohn, a prominent Zionist colonizer in Palestine from the famous Aaronsohn family, each colony had its own leaders and established its own courts¹⁰ as well as its own armed forces.¹¹ Parallel to the increase of the Jewish population in Palestine, the Zionist leaders started out to elevate the intellectual and economic level of the immigrants and commenced activities to create a mutual identity among them.¹² In this regard, the teaching of the Hebrew language and the engagement of Jewish immigrants in agriculture using modern techniques were the most important undertakings in Palestine.¹³

While the Zionist movement was flourishing, the Ottoman Empire had for a long time been struggling to assert its authority over its subjects throughout the realm. Therefore, Zionist activities immediately attracted attention since their aim, as defined by the movement's leaders, was to expand its influence over the Jews and this was seen as detrimental to the Ottoman state's domination. Beginning in the Hamidian era, the Ottoman government took all possible precautions to discourage Jewish immigration to Palestine.¹⁴ Following Abdulhamid II, the Young Turk leaders displayed a hostile attitude toward Zionist activities as far as they were able given the international balance of power. It was impossible, however, for the Ottoman government to prohibit Jewish immigration entirely, due to the fact that the immigrants were protected by the Great Powers.¹⁵

The abolition of the capitulations upon the entry of the Ottoman Empire into World War I gave the Ottoman authorities a free hand, to some extent, to restrict the Zionist movement in Palestine. In this regard, as the governor general of geographical Syria, Cemal Pasha took significant measures to check this movement and abolish its autonomy. This section sets out to clarify Cemal's actions aimed at destroying the autonomy of that movement, beginning with his ideas on Zionism.¹⁶

Cemal Pasha on Zionism

As indicated throughout the present study, Cemal's aim in Syria and Palestine was to integrate these regions into the Ottoman Empire through the elimination of local intermediaries, benefiting from the absence of international pressure. In this regard, he tried to eliminate or check all current and future threats to the realization of this aim. He was therefore a strong opponent of Zionist aims, like most of his predecessors who tried to centralize the Ottoman Empire as much as possible. As a movement aimed ultimately at the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, and one that had acquired considerable autonomy from the government, Zionism had to be controlled like the other opposition movements and autonomous bodies in Syria and Palestine to successfully centralize Syria.

In his controversial book on the creation of the modern Turkey, using mainly Ottoman documents, Fuat Dündar touches upon Cemal's aims in his treatment of the Zionists. He is the first in the literature on this subject to use the Ottoman Archives. However, interestingly enough, Dündar claims that

Cemal's attitude toward the Zionists should be evaluated as part of the CUP's ethnic engineering, aimed at the Turkification of the Ottoman realm. As will be indicated below, Cemal did not undertake any action to exile all the Jews. His only aim was to eliminate the intermediaries between the state and the Jews. He restricted exile to those who did not accept Ottoman sovereignty and the leaders of Zionist organizations. The first case was considered an open challenge to the supremacy of the Ottoman government in the region, while the second was seen as an obstacle to the Ottomanization of the Jews. Dündar disregards these realities and does not seem to inquire into Cemal's policies of strengthening Ottoman domination in Palestine. In the same regard, he does not touch the aims of the Zionist movement and it is impossible to find an anti-Jewish remark from Cemal in his correspondence with the central government. His entire concern was to block the Zionists' designs regarding the separation of Palestine from the Ottoman Empire with the establishment of a Jewish state there. Cemal did not adopt a general policy of exile against the Jews. While disagreeing about Cemal's aspirations, the present study agrees with that of Dündar that, in the beginning of his governorate, Cemal aimed at the expulsion of the Zionist Jews from Palestine.¹⁷

As a Unionist who believed in the full authority of the state over its citizens, Cemal's opposition to Zionism stemmed from his opposition to it as a movement that aimed at establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. From his point of view, Zionism had to be checked like the other opposition movements in Syria and Palestine to achieve the full control of the Ottoman state over the Syrian peoples, both administratively and ideologically. Thus, immediately after his arrival in Syria, Cemal made an investigation into this movement and concluded:

Those [the members of the Zionist Movement] are seriously disastrous [*afer*] for the land of Palestine [*Arz-ı Filistin*] ... They have extended their independence over the establishment of a religious court. In my opinion, as soon as possible, there is a need for legislation and it should include that:

1. From now on, none of the Jewish immigrants is going to be allowed to settle in Palestine, even if they accept Ottoman citizenship.
2. No colony will be established that is settled exclusively by Jews, and the existing colonies should no longer be called "colonies" but will be called villages on condition that the appropriate names be determined by the state.
3. The people who have foreign citizenship and their deputies will not be allowed to intervene in the issues of those villages or in the personal problems of those villagers.
4. All those political, social, and economic societies established in order to take Jewish immigrants to Palestine and settle them there are abolished. The foreigners who are the members of those societies will not be allowed to live in Palestine, and those who establish such a secret society will be deported from the Ottoman Realm [*Memalik-i Osmaniye*].
5. The philanthropic communities

established for the settlement of Jewish immigrants in the Ottoman motherland cannot have authorization to employ officials in Palestine. Those who conduct such activities secretly will be deported from the Ottoman motherland.¹⁸

As can be understood from this passage, Cemal Pasha was disturbed by the functions of the Zionist organization that would normally be performed by the state. Moreover, the colonies were outside of the bureaucratic hierarchy and control of the state. With similar considerations, he ordered the collection of all weapons in the possession of the Jewish colonists.¹⁹ In the same telegram, he stated that he would deport some of the most dangerous (*azılı*) Zionist leaders, refusing their appeals for Ottoman citizenship. If the deportation of those leaders could be achieved, then the remaining Jews would be easily amenable to the viewpoint of the Ottoman government.²⁰ If Zionism was checked as he described, Cemal believed it would be easier to integrate the Jewish community into the empire.

It is sufficiently clear in his draft law that Cemal's only aim in the prevention of Jewish immigration was to forestall the realization of Zionist aims in Syria that would have hindered Ottoman supremacy. What is lacking in Dündar's approach is that he fails to contextualize the aims of the Zionist movement in Cemal's policy of Jewish deportations. The text quoted above indicates that Cemal aimed at the control of Zionist activities, rather than any Turkification of Palestine inspired by ethnic engineering. The existence of Jews in Palestine posed no inconvenience for Cemal as long as they remained loyal to Ottoman authority. Although Talat seemed to have agreed personally, Cemal's draft law was not approved by the central government on the grounds that the international public would oppose it. However, Talat advised Cemal to struggle against the Zionist movement with the tools already available to him.²¹

Three months later, on 28 May 1915, Cemal Pasha again warned the central government about the Zionist threat, and without giving details declared that he had prepared a plan to extirpate (*kökünden çözmek*) this problem. For the implementation of this plan, he demanded the appointment of the chief rabbi of Salonika to the same position in Jerusalem. In the same telegram, he also stated his irritation that any action against the Zionist movement was reflected all around the world by their propaganda as an attack on Judaism.²² Approximately one year later, he repeated his offer. In July 1916, the *Gazette Levant Levedat* (?) newspaper published an article stating that the Ottoman Empire was negotiating the establishment of a Jewish republic in Palestine with the American ambassador Morgenthau. The newspaper claimed that the government had shown itself inclined toward the idea of the establishment of such a state. Cemal strongly denied the claims of the newspaper and requested again the issuance of a law prohibiting Jewish immigration and the Jewish purchase of land in Palestine to show the opposition of the Ottoman government to Zionism.²³ On 27 January 1917 he repeated his proposal to issue a

law against Zionist activities. He suggested banning foreigners with Zionist affiliations from entering Ottoman country and the deportation of Zionists currently in the Ottoman realm. He was of the opinion that it would be a mistake "to wait until the complete maturation of its poisonous fruits to launch the struggle against Zionism."²⁴ However, as already noted, all his requests to draft a law against the Jews were rejected by the central government out of fear of international reaction.

In spite of the refusal of his draft laws by the central government, Cemal did not give up on his struggle against the Zionist movement. Instead, he increased, to a considerable extent, the authority of the state over the Jewish colonies during his governorate in Syria.

Taking action against the Zionist movement

As a step toward limiting the power of the Zionist movement and increasing the state's control over the Jews in Palestine, Cemal appointed the late *kaymakam* of Jaffa, Bahaeddin Bey, as the attaché of the 4th Army for the Information Service. Bahaeddin was ordered by Cemal to struggle against the Zionist movement. Immediately after his appointment, he published an announcement in the Jewish newspaper *Ha-herut* on 25 January 1915 warning all Jews to stay away from the Zionist organization. He also declared that the government had decided to condemn the Zionist movement, which aimed at the establishment of a Jewish state in the lands of the Ottoman state, and that anybody who maintained secret relations with this organization would be punished. In the same announcement, it was highlighted that these governmental actions were only against Zionism and that the Jews who were loyal to the state would not be harmed in any manner.²⁵ However, Bahaeddin directed his measures against the whole population. He was so harsh in his treatment of the Jewish population that he drew reactions from both the German and American ambassadors. As a consequence of their lobbying activities, at the beginning of February, Bahaeddin was recalled to İstanbul by a decision of the cabinet and assigned to a new post.²⁶

However, the dismissal of Bahaeddin did not terminate the process. Cemal was suspicious that some Zionist Jews had established a secret organization that had become a threat to Ottoman authority.²⁷ For that reason, the Intelligence Service of the 4th Army, that is, Cemal's army, carried out a search for Zionist activities in the Jewish quarter of Jaffa and found documents demonstrating that some services that were supposed to be performed by the government body, such as legal procedures, postal services, policing, and some municipal services, had been performed by the Jewish communities of the Jaffa district. Furthermore, they had a special flag for themselves. For that reason, the governor of Jerusalem noted that the army commander was planning to refuse the application of the Zionist leaders for Ottoman citizenship and to deport them. In the same way, the deportation of Ottoman subjects who had Zionist aspirations was among the plans of the army

commander.²⁸ These telegrams indicate that Cemal Pasha's plan was to remove the Zionist control over the Jewish population that had prevented the Ottoman government from creating a uniform body.

All these statements and actions on Cemal's part lead us to the conclusion that he did not have any special project of ethnic engineering against the Jews in Palestine. His only opposition was directed against the rise of Zionism, aimed at the establishment of a home for the Jews in Palestine, as a challenge to Ottoman authority. To this end, he took a series of measures against this movement. First of all, he expelled the Jews who did not acquire Ottoman citizenship and then he deported the prominent Zionists from Palestine. As will be shown below in detail, Cemal did everything in his power to check Zionism in Palestine.

Naturalization and expulsion of the Jewish citizens of the Entente states

As will be seen in Chapter 4, with the outbreak of the war, all citizens of enemy states were subject to deportation. As part of this process, the Jewish immigrants who were citizens of these states were also to be expelled. Since Cemal Pasha considered Zionism a threat to the integrity of the empire, in the beginning of the war, he made use of the deportation process to block the Zionists' designs by expelling the Jews from Palestine. It is noteworthy that this was not a special plan prepared only with the expulsion of Jews in mind: All citizens of foreign states were subjected to the same treatment.²⁹

Furthermore, the Jews were treated in a privileged way in comparison to other foreign nationals and they were given an opportunity to acquire Ottoman citizenship. This situation emerged when the decision to expel the Jews from Jerusalem caused great anger in Zionist circles all around the world. They had a considerable global network that could direct international public opinion against the Ottoman government. Wary of such widespread reaction and facing the pressure of the German and American ambassadors, as well as the pro-Jewish members of the CUP, at the beginning of January 1915 the Ottoman government softened its stance and issued an exception that enabled residents of Jewish origin to acquire Ottoman citizenship within 10 days by paying 40 francs as an application fee.³⁰ Those who refused Ottoman citizenship had to leave the country.³¹ It can be presumed that accepting them as Ottoman citizens would facilitate their integration into the empire and put them under its direct rule by the way of naturalization.

Those who did not opt for Ottoman citizenship were deported by Cemal during December 1914 and January 1915. Some 2,700 Jews of the Entente states were sent to Egypt on Italian vessels.³² The report by the governor of Jerusalem, Midhat Bey, clarifies how the government tried to facilitate the process of acquiring Ottoman citizenship for the non-Ottoman Jews. With the permission of the central government, at the beginning of February, the governor extended the application deadline for a second time and the fee was abandoned to smooth the process of naturalization for Jewish immigrants.

The governor informed Talat that by the beginning of February the number of the applicants was at 3,000.³³

The Zionists exaggerated their treatment in Palestine to the German government and the international public. They claimed that Ottoman high officials in Palestine had started to systematically destroy Jewish houses and belongings and that these officials had also invited the Arabs to confiscate the Jews' goods.³⁴ However, quite the reverse of what the Zionist leaders claimed was true, and the German ambassador in İstanbul and the German consuls in Jaffa and Jerusalem agreed that the Zionist claims were exaggerated and that many of the Ottoman policies against the Jews were not unique to the latter, but applicable for all people in the region as a result of the difficulties of the war.³⁵

In June 1915, some non-Ottoman Jews were given citizenship. Some 970 of the applicants became Ottoman citizens and were exempted from deportation. According to the remarks of Dr. Ruppin, the director of the Palestine office of the Zionist organization, it was no longer possible to deport the Jews in Palestine.³⁶ By the end of September 1915, the citizenship process for the Jews had been completed, and on 20 September, those who refused to accept Ottoman nationality, or whose applications were refused by the Ottoman government, were deported from Palestine. They numbered around 500, and the deportees were generally affiliated with Zionism. Most of them were Russian citizens and were sent to Egypt.³⁷

Taking both the process of deportation of Jews from Entente states and Cemal's reports on the Zionist movement into consideration, it can be concluded that, in the beginning, Cemal Pasha wished to expel all members of the Jewish population of the Entente states who had Zionist affiliations for the sake of forestalling the possible separation of Palestine from the empire. Moreover, at first, he thought of all the Jews as part of the Zionist movement. However, according to the remarks of the German consul in Jerusalem, he soon realized the difference between Zionism and the Jewry and directed his attention toward the Zionists.³⁸ As a final remark, it must again be highlighted that all his actions against the Jews were intended to remove the Zionist barrier, as he saw it, between the government and the Jews, not to bring an end to the Jewish existence in Palestine. The naturalization of the Jews aimed at putting them under the rule of Ottoman law. Another aspect of his anti-Zionist policy, based on similar considerations, was to exile the Zionist leaders.

Prosecution of the Zionist leaders

For Cemal Pasha, being a Zionist leader had the same meaning as being a separatist, and hence constituted an obstacle to his policy of state formation in Syria. For that reason, he started his struggle against the Zionist leaders immediately after his arrival in Syria. According to Ephraim Cohn, the director of the schools of the German Jews' Benevolent Society

(Hilfsverein), Cemal Pasha regarded Zionism as a threat, while looking at the Jews with sympathy. During his short stay in Jerusalem before the first attack against Egypt, Cemal delivered a sharp speech against the Zionist movement and in that short span of time he exiled 12 of the Zionist leaders to Galilee (Northern Palestine) on the grounds that they had disrupted the peace. There were prominent Zionists among them such as Antebi and Grasowsky.³⁹

Cemal's treatment of the Zionist leaders was frequently subject to interference by the lobbying activities of the German government in Istanbul. Thus, he had to back down on some of his decisions under pressure from the international press, where the Zionists had considerable influence. Therefore, in most cases, to put his plans into practice he had to change his method of action. In this context, at the beginning of his time as governor of Syria, Cemal decided to expel 49 of the prominent colonists. However, as a result of German intervention, he had to withdraw this decision and attempt to implement it gradually and in a piecemeal way. Some of them were expelled in February and another group was sent to Egypt and Anatolia in March.⁴⁰ Likewise, in mid-August 1915, the prominent leaders of the Zionist colonies Dr. Mossinsohn, Aronotiz, Rabbiner Fishmann, Ridnik, Fein, and the director of the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jaffa, Dr. Bogratoschof, had to leave Palestine. According to the Zionist representative in Berlin, with these expulsions Cemal Pasha aimed at the destruction of the Hebrew school system and the Jewish colonization system, and these results were a threat to the Jewish society imagined by Zionism.⁴¹

Among the expelled Zionists were some whose applications for Ottoman citizenship had been refused since they were perceived as a threat to Cemal Pasha's integration and control policies in Syria. They were deported to Egypt on Italian and American ships.⁴² Others had already acquired Ottoman citizenship. Therefore, they were mostly arrested and taken to Damascus for trial at court martials. Some of them were released while others were sent into exile from Palestine to Anatolia.⁴³

The most important decision made by Cemal Pasha regarding the Zionist leaders was the expulsion of Dr. Arthur Ruppin, the leader of the Zionists in Palestine. He had German citizenship and enjoyed a good reputation in Jewish circles in America. Therefore, his existence in Palestine was of key importance for the Zionist organizations there.⁴⁴ Cemal Pasha first tried to expel Ruppin from Palestine in April 1915. He requested that the German ambassador in Istanbul, via the Damascus consul, recall the Zionist leader.⁴⁵ However, his departure was blocked by the German government.⁴⁶ In October 1915, he renewed his request. But the German ambassador opposed Ruppin's recall. As a result, Cemal accepted the German intervention and allowed Ruppin to stay on condition that he had to hand his post over to an Ottoman citizen. Hereupon, another Zionist leader, Dr. Thon, who had Austrian citizenship, had to apply for Ottoman citizenship and take over the presidency of the Zionist office in Palestine.⁴⁷

In mid-July 1916, Cemal's anti-Zionist sentiments were triggered again by some news published in the French, English, and neutral press. These reports claimed that the Ottoman Empire had agreed to the sale of land in Palestine to the Jews upon the request of the American ambassador. The source of the news was Morgenthau, the former American ambassador in Constantinople. Cemal Pasha was furious with this news, and took it as an opportunity to expel Ruppin from Palestine, although the claims were refuted by Morgenthau himself.⁴⁸

Thus, on 11 September 1916, Cemal Pasha called Dr. Ruppin to his office and requested in a polite but stern manner that he leave Palestine within 10 days. Ruppin asked the reason of his deportation. Cemal answered him that he was tired of Zionism and no longer wanted to be bothered by the movement. Additionally, he advised Ruppin not to waste his time trying to secure intervention against Cemal's decision (he meant German intervention). Ruppin inferred from this threat that if he had applied to Germany for help, Cemal would choose to persecute the Zionist institutions under German protection. For that reason, to avoid damaging the Zionist organization in Palestine, he accepted Cemal's decision without opposition and declined any intervention in this decision. When he was leaving Cemal's office, Ruppin stressed that he had never acted against Ottoman interests and that, maybe, in future, they could meet again so he could explain the issue to Cemal Pasha. Cemal answered: "Maybe, but in Germany."⁴⁹ However, instead of returning to Germany, Ruppin chose to stay in İstanbul and continue his activities there.

After getting rid of Ruppin, Cemal looked for the ways to send his successor, Thon, and his vice-president, Yellin, out of Palestine. They had taken over responsibility for the organization of Zionist activities in Palestine after the exile of Ruppin. On 30 January 1917, Cemal called Yellin to Damascus with his family and later, on 4 February, he ordered the appearance of Thon in Damascus. But, this time, Cemal withdrew his decision and gave up the idea of expelling these two leaders from Palestine, most probably to avoid the reaction of the international public against him.⁵⁰

With these actions, Cemal had managed to check Zionist activities to some extent, and his concern regarding Zionism entered a new, more tranquil stage until the British military threat against Palestine appeared. After the First Battle in Gaza, Cemal decided to evacuate Gaza and Jaffa. Whether this decision was taken with military considerations or for political reasons needs to be understood to get a sense of Cemal's policy on Zionism.

The evacuation of Jaffa and attempts to evacuate Jerusalem

The threat of a British occupation of Palestine compelled Cemal Pasha to evacuate Jaffa and Gaza immediately after the First Battle of Gaza on 28 March. For the same reason, he also decided to evacuate Jerusalem, but did not carry out this plan. First, Gaza was evacuated. But, given the small

number of Jews in Gaza the issue did not make it onto the international agenda. However, given the concentration of Jews in Jaffa and Jerusalem there was great anxiety in Jewish circles all around the world, fueled by Zionist propaganda, regarding the motives for these evacuations.⁵¹ In this section, the discussion will be focused on the aims and implementation of the evacuations.

Fuat Dündar examines the evacuation of Jaffa, and concludes that, in Cemal's eyes, there was no military threat to the city at that time. The pasha only aimed at the Turkification of Jaffa and Jerusalem, and hoped to make Jerusalem a center of Islam and Turkishness, taking the threat of occupation as an opportunity. Therefore, he decided to evacuate the cities. It seems that Dündar fails to appreciate that the evacuation decision emerged as a measure to defend Palestine against British attack, although it had some political aspects. He discusses the issue as a deliberate movement planned by the CUP leaders long before, rather than as a sudden event resulting from, the circumstances of war. Indeed, his book does not take the reality of the military threat into consideration.⁵² Although Cemal had political aims regarding the control of the Zionist movement, an approaching military threat could not be denied. In the reports that Cemal sent to Enver, it can easily be inferred that he expected a great British expedition following the First Battle of Gaza. Chapter 8 of this study will clarify how seriously Cemal Pasha considered the military situation on the Palestine front following the British attack. The evacuation of Jaffa was planned as a measure against a possible naval action by the Entente. Secondly, Dündar asserts that Cemal and the central government in İstanbul saw eye to eye on this issue. It is true that Cemal and the central government agreed many times regarding policy on Zionism. However, the conflicts mentioned before over the issue cannot be written off. This is especially true with regard to the evacuation of Jerusalem, where a request from Talat and an order from Enver played a crucial role in the abandonment of Cemal's plans.⁵³

Relatively impartial observers at the time did not deny the existence of a military danger, in addition to acknowledging Cemal's political aims in the evacuation. According to the report of the German consul in Jerusalem, it became apparent with the First Battle of Gaza that the evacuation would be beneficial in military terms. If Gaza had not been evacuated, the initial British siege would have caused panic among the residents of the city, and that would have had a negative impact on the Ottoman troops. Furthermore, the Jewish people in Jaffa sympathized with the British. Therefore, in the event of battle, there was a risk of espionage on behalf of the "enemy" by the local people of the city. Finally, he added that the British danger created a pretext for Cemal to carry out his designs to ruin Zionist organization in Palestine. Germany's Jerusalem consul, in spite of his Jewish origin and his sympathy with Zionism, thought Cemal's evacuation plan primarily emanated from military considerations.⁵⁴ Germany's military representative in Constantinople also emphasized that Cemal's action had legitimate military justification.⁵⁵ Similarly, accepting the political aspect of this action, the Spanish

consul states in his diaries that “espionage must exist on a grand scale.”⁵⁶ After his visit to Jerusalem, General Falkenhayn was similarly convinced that the evacuation was carried out for military reasons. Quite the reverse of the Jerusalem consul and Falkenhayn, the German ambassador in Constantinople insisted that the military situation had contributed to the political aspirations of Cemal Pasha and that, therefore, the primary reason for the evacuation was political.⁵⁷ A conversation between Cemal and the Spanish consul is worth mentioning here to understand the military reasons for the evacuation of Jaffa:

I tried to get from His Excellency [Cemal Pasha] the order for the Spaniards to remain in Jaffa at their own risk, but he refused. I attacked the question saying to him: “The intention of the government being to avoid the death of foreigners in case of bombing, if they renounce all rights of reclamation against the government ... ” But he cut me off saying, “That is not our objective but rather to defend ourselves in the city as we have done in Gaza, and how do you want us to defend ourselves between the screams and wailing of women and children?” I had to capitulate unwillingly.⁵⁸

A closer look at the process of the evacuation will clarify the reasons behind the decision. As will be described in Chapter 8, Cemal Pasha discovered British preparations for an extensive attack against Palestine as a consequence of exploration by Ottoman aviators. Therefore, that he was aware of a military danger cannot be denied. However, some policies uniquely directed at the Jews made Cemal’s intentions suspicious: At the beginning of the process, Cemal allowed German citizens to stay in Jaffa, but exempted the Jews from this privilege. In addition, he allowed farmers to stay on in Jaffa until the end of the harvest season. As an exception, at the outset, Jewish farmers were not allowed to stay. The intervention of the German consul in Jerusalem ensured the extension of this exemption to the Jews as well. All in all, it seems that, in the beginning, political aims played a partial role, although the evacuation cannot be deemed a deliberate action planned by CUP leaders independent of the circumstances of war.⁵⁹

Soon after the beginning of the evacuation of Jaffa, the Entente and neutral press began to use the policy as a propaganda measure against Cemal Pasha and the Ottoman government. The news from France’s Agence-Havas was the last straw in this sense. The news claimed that it was only the Jews who had been evacuated from Jaffa and Gaza, that they were not provided with transportation, and that they were left without homes. It was also claimed that the private belongings of the immigrants and Christian places of worship had been plundered.⁶⁰ Thon observed that the picture drawn by the Agence was very exaggerated and accusatory.⁶¹

In reaction to these reports, Cemal commenced counter-propagandizing. He invited prominent Zionists as well as Christian and Jewish religious

leaders to his office and asked them to publish proclamations in the European press refuting the claims. Cemal offered money in exchange for these duties (1,000 Turkish lira [ltq.]) and to relieve the problems of the immigrants (3,000 ltq.).⁶²

Immediately after the meeting, Dr. Thon, the leader of the Zionists, sent telegrams denying the claims to 13 Zionist newspapers.⁶³ Similarly, the grand rabbi of Istanbul gave an interview to the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and reported that the Ottoman government had reserved 100,000 ltq. of aid for the refugees. Newspapers in Copenhagen published this report and the denial of the Ottoman government regarding the claims.⁶⁴ Similarly, the religious leaders of the Jewish and Christian communities sent telegrams to the European press.⁶⁵

Although the reports from the Entente press had exaggerated the conditions of the emigrants, in response to this press campaign Cemal Pasha obviously changed his treatment of the evacuated Jaffans and provided better resources for them.⁶⁶ According to Kühlmann, the German ambassador in İstanbul, during the evacuation of Jaffa everything proceeded routinely, except for some small problems that occurred arising from the circumstances of war.⁶⁷ The governor of Jerusalem informed Talat that 37 guards, 13 police, and 33 gendarmes were left in Jaffa to protect the evacuees' belongings.⁶⁸ Above all, contrary to his first declaration, Cemal allowed the refugees to settle anywhere in Palestine except the coastal strip.⁶⁹ The prohibition on Jewish settlement along the coast also shows Cemal's mistrust of the Jews.

It can be concluded that Cemal saw Zionism as a threat to Ottoman domination in Palestine and to the integration of the Jewish population into the empire. He wanted to control and eliminate this movement like the other movements he regarded as threatening the unification of the empire. Although he was exposed to some pressure from domestic and international politics, and from Germany in particular, he was generally successful in implementing his plans. The armed guards of the Jewish colonies were disbanded at the beginning of the war⁷⁰ as well as their special courts.⁷¹ In addition, their colonies were transformed into Ottoman villages and the chiefs of the colonies became the *muhtars* of the newly created Ottoman-Jewish villages.⁷² Finally, it is worth reiterating that Cemal wanted to eliminate this movement only because of its aspirations regarding the establishment of an independent Jewish state in Palestine and its potential and practical influence over Jewish society there, not because he wanted to redesign the population of Palestine along ethnic lines.

Subjugation of the Christian clergy

Another group that was exposed to Cemal's policies of suppression to clear the way for the structural unification of the state and to check the influence of foreign powers was the clergy of the Christian sects, who enjoyed broad autonomy in the years preceding World War I under the protection rights of the Great Powers provided by the capitulations.⁷³ As in the case of other

autonomous structures, the abolition of this protection with the outbreak of the Great War signified the beginning of the end of an autonomous clergy for Christians in the Ottoman Empire in general, and in Syria in particular. In the pre-war period, the Christians mainly sympathized with the Europeans in their competition with the Ottoman state over who would wield influence in the Arab provinces. The agents of European influence were, to a large extent, the Christian clergy. Therefore, according to the Spanish consul in Jerusalem, the abolition of the capitulations caused a tremendous panic among the Christian population, since they were afraid of a Christian massacre in Syrian towns.⁷⁴

To eliminate the European influence over Syria's Christian communities, Cemal attempted to Ottomanize the clergy and, thus, to assert the power of the state over the Christian population. For that purpose, during his governorate in Syria, Cemal Pasha set a premium on the subjugation of the autonomous clergy to the Ottoman imperial authority and made a considerable effort to eliminate the foreign influence disseminated mostly by the clergy of these religious communities. As a result, the communities that were under the influence of the Entente states, especially France, were persecuted and subjugated by Cemal to a large extent. Possibly, he aimed, to some extent, at the secularization of the Christian communities, and, thus, at the increase of the state's control over its Christian citizens.

When World War I broke out, the vast majority of the Christian population in Syria sympathized with France and Russia, due to the impact of their clergy, and saw their salvation from the Ottoman "yoke" as contingent on an Entente victory in the war.⁷⁵ According to Austria's consul in Damascus, Lebanon, where Maronite Christians formed a majority of the population, was "like the French part of the East."⁷⁶ In terms of French and Russian influence, the most important sects were the Greek Orthodox and the Maronites. Cemal Pasha resorted to subordinating the clergy of these communities to the Ottoman sultan hierarchically to break the French influence over them and to show their communities the strength of the state. In that regard, first, he took control over the appointment of the Maronite patriarch, who had not been appointed by the decree of the Ottoman sultan, unlike the other patriarchs, for about 100 years. This difference had granted significant autonomy to the patriarchate. In spite of the irritation of the Maronite clergy, in the second month of his appointment as the governor general of Syria, Cemal made the patriarch a government official and ordered his appointment by decree.⁷⁷ With this decree, all the patriarchs became public officers of the government.⁷⁸ According to the Austrian consul in Beirut, this would mean that, from then on, those who were favored by the government could be appointed as the Maronite patriarch in spite of the wishes of the patriarchate. In response, the patriarch appealed to the Austrian consul for the intervention of his government, but his endeavor was not successful.⁷⁹

Furthermore, the bishops were crucial in the dissemination of French influence among the Maronites in Lebanon. Given their sympathy for the

French in the region, in the event of a French invasion by sea it was likely that the bishops would support the hostile states. What's more, at the beginning of the war, the Maronite patriarch gave an interview to the French newspaper *Le Matin* and declared that 6,000 Maronites in Beirut were ready to join the French army.⁸⁰ Subsequently, Cemal Pasha called a large group of Maronite bishops to Jerusalem and Damascus for "consultations." Some of them who were regarded as likely to support France in a coastal occupation were kept as hostages. The most notable among them were the bishop of Cyprus, Boulos Auwad, the bishop of Beirut, Boutros Schebli, and some priests in the immediate circle of the Maronite patriarch. They would be subject to arrest in the event of a naval action by the Entente.⁸¹

Cemal Pasha saw it as necessary that this assertion of Ottoman authority over the Maronite patriarch be displayed in public to demonstrate the authority and control of the state to the Syrian people, in general, and to the Maronite community, in particular. Thus, on 27 July 1915, the patriarch paid Cemal a "visit" in his headquarters in Sofar in Lebanon upon the latter's forceful invitation. The patriarch covered a long distance from his summer house to appear before Cemal Pasha in spite of his old age. The German consul in Beirut interpreted the meaning of this event as "the demonstration to all over the world that the Maronite patriarch [was] no longer the master of Lebanon, [and that] he was subjugated to the representative of the Ottoman government in Lebanon." In a similar context, *Journal de Beyrouth*, the semi-official newspaper of the government, presented this event as "the resurgence of deep feelings of Ottomanism."⁸²

Although the patriarch had been attached to the body of the Ottoman Empire, he was treated with distrust from the beginning, since he had been a mainstay of French policy before the war.⁸³ Therefore, the Maronite patriarch underwent a similar process of prosecution to the Arabist parties, since a letter he wrote speaking out against the Ottoman government to the French Foreign Ministry was found among the documents seized within the French consulate at the beginning of the war. As a result, the patriarch was sent into exile in Adana on account of his French partisanship.⁸⁴

For Cemal, another autonomous group that had to be controlled for the sake of asserting Ottoman dominance over the Syrian peoples was the Greek-Catholic sect, which could be considered another important constituent of French influence in Syria. At the beginning of Cemal's era, like the Maronite patriarch, the Greek-Catholic patriarch's rights over his community were abolished and most of his suffragan bishops were heavily punished (three of his 14 suffragan bishops were sent into exile, one was sentenced to death, and another two were expelled from their own dioceses). Thus, the Greek-Catholic bishop of Acre was in France when the war began. He delivered a public speech and stressed Syrian Christians' loyalty to France. This speech was published in the French press and, following the Ottoman cabinet's declaration of war, the bishop was sentenced to death because of this speech. The bishop, who learned of this decision at the last minute, changed his route on

the way to Egypt, saving himself from execution. Similarly, the bishop of Baalbek was convicted of being an accomplice of Nakhle Pasha Mutran's "treason" and sent into exile in Urfa.⁸⁵ The bishop of Tripoli, Joseph Dumani, was exiled to Sivas under similar circumstances. The Greek-Catholic patriarch Kyrill VIII, who was supposed to stay three years in Syria and three years in Egypt as a requirement of his post, was living in Egypt at the beginning of the war. The Ottoman government issued a call for him to return Syria. Upon his refusal, the government gathered the bishops in Damascus and instructed them to choose an acting patriarch. In spite of the limited number of participants, the request was carried out.⁸⁶

The story of Djerasimos Messara, the Greek-Orthodox archbishop, does not differ much from those mentioned above. He had to resign from his post on request of the chairman officer of the Conscription Commission in Beirut. The archbishop was a member of the commission. The chairman had asked him to work with more enthusiasm, but he resisted this request. In addition, he opposed the extension of military service to members of his community during a meeting of the commission. For this reason, Habib Pasha Saad was expelled from the meeting by the chairman. The chairman said he would be court-martialed, but later, as a consequence of an agreement between the government and the church, the archbishop retired and the issue was resolved. Since all the candidates for archbishop had been educated either in Russia or in Greece, it became impossible to find an appropriate replacement. In the end, Michel Ibrahim Sursock, the representative of Beirut's Greek-Orthodox community in the parliament, was appointed as head of the local Greek-Orthodox.⁸⁷ If secularization is understood as the limitation of the power of religious authority over daily life and social order, and the increase of worldly sovereignty in its place, then these decisions can be seen as a step toward the secularization of the Christian communities in Syria.

Other than the abolition of the autonomy of minority religious hierarchies and their annexation to the imperial body, Cemal Pasha worked to secure the loyalty of the clergy by giving money to their churches. The conditions of war had left some of the patriarchates to twist in the wind, and in the absence of any other option, the Greek-Orthodox Church in Jerusalem and Damascus and the Armenian Catholicos in Jerusalem had to appeal to Cemal Pasha for help. He responded positively to their requests each time. From the end of 1915, he lent money to the two religious posts periodically until the end of his governorate on the condition of repayment after the war.⁸⁸ Kurd Ali writes in his memoirs that he persuaded Cemal that assistance to the patriarch of the Greek-Orthodox community in Damascus would increase sympathy for the state among both Muslims and Christians, since the patriarch was respected by both communities.⁸⁹

Cemal used all these methods to secure the unitary structure of the Ottoman Empire and control the conduct of the Christians in Syria, shedding the religious intermediaries between the state and its Christian subjects. Furthermore, the removal of the authority of the clergy from Christian societies

was, indeed, a kind of secularization, facilitating the control of the state over them. However, the result was not what he desired in terms of the sentiments of the local population. Even if government control over Christian communities had increased, his policies did not contribute to any growth of pro-Ottoman feeling among the local Christians, rather it made them even more hostile to the state while antagonizing circles that had previously been warm toward the government, increasing their sympathy for the Entente powers. Cemal Pasha's attempts to subjugate all sections of society made Muslims and Christians closer to each other, whereas they had pursued different aspirations in the years preceding the war.⁹⁰

Cemal did not only endeavor to remove the authority of religious institutions and "civil society organizations," like those of the Zionists, over Ottoman citizens. Administratively autonomous bodies were also treated in the same way. As the only example of this, the case of the abolition of the autonomous government in Lebanon is worth analyzing to further our understanding of the nature of Cemal's regime in Syria.

The end of the "Long Peace": annexation of Mount Lebanon's government⁹¹

On the verge of the war, the autonomous government in Lebanon (*Mutasarrifiyya*) enjoyed all the basic institutions of a modern governmental apparatus. The autonomous government in Mount Lebanon was guided by constitutional regulations. In addition, the Lebanese government had centralized executive, fiscal, and judicial branches, as well as municipal administrations serving in the towns. In Akarlı's words, "the entire system was financed by locally raised revenue and manned by experienced native personnel."⁹²

The religious communities and political tendencies played an essential role in the establishment of this autonomy in Lebanon: The Maronites formed the lion's share of the population, followed by the Greek-Orthodox, and the Druze. The former were deeply influenced by France, while the Orthodox were sympathetic to Russia. According to the governor of Beirut, the religious ties, no matter how weak, between the Druze and the Ottoman Empire made them pro-Ottoman at heart, but they outwardly seemed to be pro-British.⁹³ Their pro-Ottoman attitude throughout the whole war period confirms the assessment of the governor.⁹⁴ Beyond the French sympathies of a considerable portion of the Lebanese, the French consuls had broad authority over affairs in Lebanon. The French consul, as described by Yusuf al-Hakim, could appoint and dismiss bureaucrats, such as *kaymakams*, in Lebanon without the consent of the Ottoman administration.⁹⁵

Because of these distinctive characteristics of the Lebanese government and society, the outbreak of World War I sounded the death knell for autonomous government there. Two weeks after mobilization began in Syria, high officials in Lebanon started to send reports about the dangers posed by the existing

order there and advised the seizure of control by the central Ottoman government. Bekir Sami Bey, the governor of Beirut, recommended to Talat that the system in Mount Lebanon be annexed to the Ottoman Empire administratively and that its protocols guaranteed by the Great Powers should be abolished. However, the governor did not ask for the abolition of all the privileges of the Lebanese. Rather, he proposed the continuation of their exemptions, such as military service, taxes, etc. under the guarantee of the Ottoman government.⁹⁶ In another telegram, the governor of Beirut proposed that pressure be applied on the governor of Mount Lebanon to dismiss the pro-French officials in the service of its autonomous government.⁹⁷ The *kaymakam* of Bekaa repeated the same suggestions, adding to them the closure of the pro-French newspapers, which advocated publicly in favor of France.⁹⁸ In his subsequent proposals, the governor of Beirut repeated that the recognition of the privileges of Lebanon by the Ottoman government while abolishing the guaranteed rights of the Entente powers would end Lebanese distrust of the Ottoman government.⁹⁹

This advice was given as a consequence of the problems caused by the commencement of mobilization in Syria and the desire for the integration of Lebanon into the imperial body. Militarily, according to the British consul in Beirut, the Lebanese government gave protection to military deserters and opened their borders to horses and mules that had been frightened away by their owners to avoid their animals being commandeered. At the beginning of the mobilization several attempts were made by the Ottoman gendarmes, led by army officers, to cross into Lebanon to arrest deserters or to seize transport animals. In every case but one the Lebanese frontier guards successfully resisted these attempts. Thereupon, the governor of Beirut openly threatened to send troops to all parts of Lebanon to seize deserters and animals liable to be requisitioned. However, an agreement was reached between the two sides.¹⁰⁰ Politically, the existence of an autonomous regime was contrary to the Unionist understanding of the unitary and sovereign state.

A few days following this agreement, the governor of Mount Lebanon was ordered by the commander of the 8th Army Corps to disarm the inhabitants of Lebanon. However, the governor refused the request, demanding an order from the grand vizier before taking such an action.¹⁰¹ This was presumably due to the remarks of the Maronite patriarch, discussed in the previous section, stating the support of his co-religionists for France and calling for its victory against Germany.

Immediately before the Ottoman entry into the war, the attempts of the Ottoman government to abolish the autonomous status of Lebanon led the Lebanese to appeal to the French consulate week after week for guns and ammunition to protect their government against an Ottoman invasion. However, the efforts of the Entente governments to forestall the participation of the Ottomans in the war as an ally of Germany prevented them from meeting the demands of the Lebanese.¹⁰² At the same time, the Lebanese in Egypt and São Paulo requested, on behalf of the Syrians and the Lebanese, that the

French government send troops to invade Lebanon.¹⁰³ These plans could not be put into action because the British headquarters in Egypt maintained a defensive policy.¹⁰⁴

When Cemal Pasha was appointed as governor general of Syria, the administration of Mount Lebanon comprised the following components: The head of the autonomous administration in Lebanon was the governor (*mutasarrıf*). This post was occupied by Ohannes Kuyumcuyan. He was the chair of the Administrative Board, which was composed of the representatives of the religious orders. Another influential figure in the Lebanese government was the vice-president of the Administrative Board. This place was filled by Habib Pasha Saad, who was a prominent member of the Maronite community. According to the assessment of the German consul of Beirut, the real power in the administration was concentrated in the hands of the vice-president of the Administrative Board. The consul depicted the Maronite patriarch and the Administrative Board, that is, Habib Pasha Saad, as the real rulers of Lebanon. The consul continued that the vice-presidency was the linchpin of French influence there. For this reason, soon after his appointment as the governor general of Syria, Cemal Pasha dismissed him.¹⁰⁵ During a visit by a Lebanese delegation, Cemal warned the Lebanese to cut their relations with all the Great Powers and advised them to devote their allegiance only to the Ottoman sultan and not to look for protection from anyone but the Ottoman government.¹⁰⁶

As a reflection of his general policy of gaining power over autonomous structures, a few days after his arrival in Syria, Cemal Pasha issued a declaration to the Lebanese, showing his hand about the integration of Lebanon's autonomous structure into the imperial system. In this declaration, he announced the expansion to Lebanon of martial law, which had gone into effect after mobilization had begun. In addition, Cemal proclaimed the continuation of the old regulations of Lebanon under the protection of the Ottoman government. He also ordered a battalion under the command of Colonel Rıza Bey to occupy Mount Lebanon. This action was carried out without resistance. Rıza Bey was appointed as commander of the Lebanese detachment, and the commander of the Lebanese gendarmerie was subordinated to him. Cemal Pasha ordered Rıza Bey to punish as severely as possible any infringement by the soldiers of the personal rights of the Lebanese and to pay for all items purchased for the army. All the educational institutions belonging to Entente powers would be seized. Some of the buildings of these institutions would be used by the troops and the others would be transferred to the Lebanese government. Cemal notified the central government that he would replace the existing governor as soon as he found a new candidate.¹⁰⁷ In a report written toward the end of his time as governor, Cemal described the occupation of Lebanon as the hurdling of an obstacle that had blocked the unity of Syria and Palestine and the dominance of the government.¹⁰⁸

Cemal did not plan to make Mount Lebanon an ordinary province of the Ottoman Empire or to subject the Lebanese to the regulations implemented

for all Ottoman citizens. Quite the reverse, he advocated the maintenance of their concessions. In his draft law regarding the status of Lebanon, he proposed the continuation of the Lebanese exemption from military service, the selection of the Lebanese gendarmerie from among the local people, and maintenance of the existing method of tax collection. He simply wanted to make the Lebanese feel that the only authority in Lebanon was that of the Ottoman government, which could grant privileges in its country.¹⁰⁹ It is difficult, however, to know whether or not the continuation of these privileges was a tactical step aimed at forestalling a rebellion in Lebanon.

As part of the policy of integrating the Lebanese government into the imperial body, in the fourth month of his time in Syria as governor general Cemal removed the governor of Lebanon, Ohannes Pasha, from his post, presumably due to his Francophile attitude.¹¹⁰ The accountant Halim Bey was temporarily appointed to his post.¹¹¹ Following the dismissal of the governor, Cemal dissolved the Administrative Board. Some of its members were dismissed while some others were invited to Cemal's headquarters in Jerusalem for "consultations." The elections to determine the members of the Administrative Board were renewed, and new, pro-Ottoman members were elected according to the rules of the former electoral law. However, all the lists were examined by both civil and military authorities, and only those who were permitted to be candidates could participate in the elections. Cemal had dealt a blow to the post of the vice-president, as well. This was the most influential post in the preceding system, and the former vice-president had played a crucial role in the perpetuation of French influence in Mount Lebanon. This post was abolished by Cemal in the newly created administration, and all influential persons who had close relations with the French or the British consuls were barred from administrative posts. Thus, the most important spaces of French influence in Lebanon were Ottomanized.¹¹²

Finding an appropriate candidate for the governorship of Lebanon took a long time for Cemal Pasha. In the end, Ali Münif Bey, the undersecretary of the Ministry of the Interior and a prominent Unionist, was appointed on 4 August 1915.¹¹³ He was a Muslim and his appointment was unlawful, since, according to the constitution of Lebanon, the governor should be a Catholic Ottoman.¹¹⁴ The Germans opposed the appointment of a Muslim to this post, believing that it would increase the frustration of the Lebanese with the Ottoman Empire, rather than strengthening their loyalty.¹¹⁵

Ali Münif was quite in accord with the character of the bureaucrat that Cemal required for Syria, as described in the Introduction of this study. He was in complete agreement with the pasha on the place of the state in governance. In the speech he delivered on the occasion of his accession to the post, Ali Münif Bey emphasized the full power of the Ottoman state over Lebanon, stressing the dangers of foreign intervention for the Lebanese:

The state of which we are subjects has abrogated the protocols, arranging both the manner of appointment and election of governors and the style

of administration. In addition, it has eliminated the obstacles preventing the Lebanese from taking advantage of the Ottoman Constitution [Kanun-ı Esasi], which had already been provided for the other subjects of the Ottoman Empire. After overcoming all foreign intervention, the state will act in this province with full independence in accordance with its rights of sovereignty. However, it is a mistake to suppose that ... the state will abolish the privileges and exemptions that Lebanon has maintained all along, or to suppose that these privileges and exemptions were shaped by foreign intervention in the issues of the mount and were protected by their guarantees. On the contrary, the state deems the Lebanese to have been worthy of these allowances from time immemorial, when no foreign intervention or mediation was available, and now [the state] does not intend to retract these benefactions and benevolences.¹¹⁶

He wrote to Talat that the Lebanese were satisfied with his speech. However, in stark contrast to the optimism of the governor, the Austrian consul in Beirut reported that Ali Münif's promises did not make any sense to the Lebanese, who had already been deprived of most of their privileges. Because of his lack of knowledge of Arabic, it was not Ali Münif himself who delivered the speech. Rather, it was only read to the Lebanese.¹¹⁷

According to the German consul in Beirut, it seemed difficult for Ali Münif to win the confidence of the Lebanese in his capacity as a Muslim governor. The Maronite clergy saw his appointment as a counter-measure to remove their influence from Lebanon. Only the Druze approached the new governor without prejudice. According to the consul, they would support Ali Münif Bey if he took an interest in their special demands. It is worth mentioning, as an indication of the decreasing influence of foreign powers that for once in Lebanon a governor did not start by sending a message to the consulates regarding his appointment or endeavoring to establish close relations with them.¹¹⁸

Immediately after his appointment, Ali Münif initiated reforms to assimilate Lebanon to the other provinces of the Ottoman Empire. He started with the organization of the courts, reducing the number of judges in the first and second instances. Following this, he appointed magistrates for the four major districts of Lebanon: Shuf, Metn, Kasrawan, and Batrun. He appointed for each first instance court an investigative judge and a prosecutor. Thus, 24 new justice offices were created. While he was making appointments to the new posts, he respected the principle of proportional representation of the various confessions, and chose 16 Maronites, three Druze, two Greek-Orthodox, two Greek-Catholics, and one Matwali, a term used for the Shiite Muslims of Lebanon. The governor did not select any non-Lebanese for the newly created posts.¹¹⁹

In the same way, Ali Münif undertook reforms in Lebanon's administrative and education systems. He endeavored to open schools on behalf of the Ottoman government, as well as taking some steps to develop public

works and agriculture. He planned to establish boys' and girls' high schools in the large villages. In these schools, according to their sizes, between two and four teachers would be assigned who could teach in Turkish and Arabic, as well as a foreign language. The governor created an inspection system for the public schools to deal with the problems of these educational institutions.¹²⁰

The purpose of his reforms was to integrate the Lebanese system into the general Ottoman order. In his own words, Ali Münif's aim was "to annihilate [*eser birakmamak*] the traces of the autonomous government, and to shape the administration of this province like other *gayr-ı mülhaka* provinces operating independently or subjected to another province by the end of the year."¹²¹ The *gayr-ı mülhaka* provinces were directly annexed to the central government because they were exposed to the danger of foreign occupation or influence, or because their possession was so crucial for the policies of the Ottoman Empire. Medina, Jerusalem, and Benghazi were the most important examples of such provinces. In the new organization, the divisions of the towns and villages were not designed on the basis of confession, as they had been in the old regime. The new order would be implemented beginning from March 1917.¹²²

The representation of the province in the Ottoman Parliament was considered another demonstration of the sovereignty of the empire. However, Lebanon was not represented in the parliament until the appointment of Ali Münif Bey. He appealed to the central government for a new arrangement in which Lebanon would be represented in parliament by three deputies: one Maronite, one Greek-Orthodox, and one Druze. The government supported Habib Pasha Saad, the old vice-president, as the Maronite candidate, Ibrahim Bey al-Suad as the Greek-Orthodox candidate, and Amin Arslan as the Druze candidate.¹²³ However, the planned elections could only be held nine months later, at the end of 1916, with some changes to the candidates. Unlike in the first draft, two of the candidates were Maronites, Rashid Rami and Amir Hares Shebab, while one was Druze, Adil Arslan from the renowned Druze family.¹²⁴

Toward the end of February 1917, Ali Münif Bey was appointed as Minister of Public Affairs and left Lebanon having succeeded, to a large extent, in integrating Lebanon into the Ottoman administrative system.¹²⁵ As for the attitude of the Lebanese to the reforms by Ali Münif, the German consul in Beirut described their general attitude as entirely lukewarm. To be more specific, the Maronites, especially the clergy, saw all his reforms as actions by the Ottoman government aimed at destroying the special status of Lebanon. The governor's insistence at every turn that his mission was to integrate Lebanon into the imperial body only increased their concerns.¹²⁶ Apart from this, the unfortunate events affecting daily life, such as famine, epidemics, and lawlessness in the food market, made him an unsuccessful governor in the eyes of the Lebanese. Nonetheless, he succeeded in integrating the Lebanese administration into the Ottoman administration.¹²⁷

Notes

- 1 For an analysis of the Ottoman *millet* system, see: M. Macit Kenanoğlu, *Osmanlı Millet Sistemi: Mit ve Gerçek*, İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2004.
- 2 For a study analyzing civil conflict in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860, see: Fawaz, Leila Tarazi, *An Occasion for War*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994; for a study on the order established following the 1860 incidents, see: Engin Deniz Akarlı, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861–1920*, California: University of California Press, 1993.
- 3 For the relations between Great Britain and the Zionists and the struggle of the latter against the former to establish a motherland in Palestine during World War I, see: Isaiah Friedmann, *The Question of Palestine, 1914–1918*, London: Routledge, 1973; for relations between Germany and the Zionists, see: Isaiah Friedmann, *Germany, Turkey, Zionism, 1897–1918*, London: Transaction Publishers, 1998.
- 4 For some examples, see: Israel Cohen, *A Short History of Zionism*, London: Frederick Muller, 1951; Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919; Nathan Rotenstreich, *Zionism: Past and Present*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007; Elie Kedourie and Sylvia G. Haim (eds.), *Zionism and Arabism in Palestine and Israel*, London: Frank Cass, 2005; Ariel L. Feldestein, *Ben-Gurion, Zionism and American Jewry, 1948–1963*, New York: Routledge, 2006; John Rose, *The Myths of Zionism*, London: Pluto Press, 2004; Ben Halpern and Jehuda Reinharz, *Zionism and the Creation of a New Society*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998; Chaim Gans, *A Just Zionism: On the Morality of the Jewish State*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008; Michael Makovsky, *Churchill's Promised Land: Zionism and Statecraft*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.
- 5 For example, Abigail Jacobson examined the relations between the Jews and the other communities in Jerusalem as well as the Ottomanist identity of some Zionists: Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*. Michelle U. Campos made a similar study on the interconnectedness of Muslims, Jews, and Christians in Palestine and their common Ottoman imperial identity: Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011. In the same context, for a recently edited book on the various groups in Ottoman Palestine under the Young Turks, see: Yuval Ben-Bassat and Eyal Ginio (eds.), *Late Ottoman Palestine*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2011.
- 6 For the related chapter in Dündar's study, see: Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, pp. 358–399.
- 7 For an explanation of the idea of a Jewish state by the founder of the movement, Theodor Herzl, see: Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, Boston: Wildside Press, 2008.
- 8 Cohen, *A Short History*, pp. 57–62.
- 9 Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 62.
- 10 Alexander Aaronsohn, *With Turks in Palestine*, Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1916, p. 3.
- 11 Aaronsohn, *ibid.*, p. 34.
- 12 For an analysis of this process, see: Halpern and Reinharz, *Zionism*, pp. 49–90.
- 13 TNA, FO 371/2482, Cairo, 8 January 1915; PA-AA, Türkei 195, Bd. 8, Öttinger to AA, 20 December 1915.
- 14 For a detailed analysis of Abdulhamid's struggle with the Zionist immigration movement to Palestine see: Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, pp. 358–362.
- 15 Hartmann, Martin, *Reisebriefe aus Syrien*, Berlin: Reimer Publication, 1913, p. 8; Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, p. 368.

- 16 Although Cemal Pasha was quite harsh against the Zionists in his memoirs, the concepts "Zion," "Zionism," and "Zionist" are never mentioned. Similarly, he explains nothing about his actions against the Jews.
- 17 For further details regarding his approach, see: Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, pp. 358–399.
- 18 BOA, DH.ŞFR 465/19, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 2 Mart 1331 (15 March 1915).
- 19 Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, p. 34.
- 20 BOA, DH.ŞFR 465/19, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 2 Mart 1331 (15 March 1915).
- 21 Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, p. 373.
- 22 BOA, DH.ŞFR 475/9, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 15 Mayıs 1331 (28 May 1915).
- 23 BOA, DH.ŞFR 529/69, Cemal to Talat, Aleppo, 10 Ağustos 1916 (24 August 1916).
- 24 *Siyonistlikle mücadeleyle başlamak için onun zehirli semerelerinin muhit-i Osmaniye'de tamamıyla inkişaf etmesini intizar etmek muvafık olmayacağı kanaatindeyim.* BOA, DH.ŞFR 544/29, Cemal to Talat, 14 Kanun-ı Sani 1332 (27 January 1917).
- 25 PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, James Simon to AA, Berlin, 17 March 1915.
- 26 PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Warburg to AA, 13 February 1915. Some Zionist reports claimed that Bahaeddin was appointed to a new post established in İstanbul to follow Zionist activities. However, there is no trace in the documents that such a position was available. For further information about these claims, see: PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Ephraim Cohn to Paul Nathan, Jerusalem, 18 February 1915.
- 27 Cemal to Enver, Damascus, 27 Eylül 1333 (27 September 1917), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 696.
- 28 BOA, DH.ŞFR 463/9, Midhat (the governor of Jerusalem) to Talat, Jerusalem, 4 Şubat 1330 (14 February 1915); Cemal to Enver, Damascus, 27 Eylül 1333 (27 September 1917), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 696; these remarks were also confirmed by Aaronsohn's memoirs, which are conveyed above: Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, pp. 3, 34.
- 29 BOA, DH.EUM 5.Şb 11/7, the governor of Beirut to EUM (Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdiriyeti), Beirut, 18 Kanun-ı Evvel 1330 (31 December 1914); HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 22 June 1915.
- 30 PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 17 January 1915; HHStA, PA 38/367, Jerusalem consul to Burian, Jerusalem, 7 June 1915.
- 31 PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 6 February 1915.
- 32 PA-AA, Türkiye 1915, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 18 January 1915; PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 21 January 1915.
- 33 BOA, DH.ŞFR 463/9, Midhat (the governor of Jerusalem) to Talat, Jerusalem, 4 Şubat 1330 (14 February 1915).
- 34 PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Bernstoff to AA (transmitting Lucius), Stockholm, 1 February 1915; PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Warburg to Bethmann-Hollweg, Berlin, 10 February 1915; PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 7, Lichtheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 22 December 1915.
- 35 PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 8 February 1915; PA-AA, Türkiye 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting Jerusalem and Jaffa consuls), Constantinople, 10 February 1915. In 1917, the German ambassador warned the local consuls that the Jewish descriptions of their issues could be exaggerated. Therefore, the ambassador requested the consuls to add their own opinions to the Jewish telegrams that were sent by the

- German Consulates: **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 16, Bernstoff to AA, Constantinople, 25 October 1917.
- 36 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 6, Wangenheim to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), 18 June 1915.
- 37 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 5, Baumert to AA, Jaffa, 24 September 1915; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 485/22, Midhat to Talat, Jerusalem, 11 Eylül 1331 (24 September 1915).
- 38 The German consul in Jerusalem interpreted this change as reflecting the Ottoman officials' recognition of the difference between Zionism and the Jewry. Despite this evaluation, the Ottoman authorities were aware of this difference from the very beginning. However, they were convinced that the Zionists' aspirations could only be blocked by the expulsion of the Jewish immigrants from Palestine. For the evaluations of the German consul regarding this supposed change see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 7, Brode to Bethmann-Hollweg, Jaffa, 26 August 1915.
- 39 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 5, Ephraim Cohn to AA, Jerusalem, 20 January 1915; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 7, Warburg to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), Berlin, 25 August 1915.
- 40 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to AA (transmitting Warburg), Constantinople, 8 February 1915; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 16 March 1915.
- 41 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 7, Warburg to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), Berlin, 25 August 1915.
- 42 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), Constantinople, 22 March 1915; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 5, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 16 March 1915.
- 43 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 6, Bernstoff to Behmann-Hollweg (transmitting Lucius), 3 April 1915; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 8, Lichtheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 22 December 1915.
- 44 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Warburg and Jacobson to AA, Berlin, 4 October 1916.
- 45 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 6, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 6 April 1915.
- 46 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Warburg and Jacobson to AA, Berlin, 4 October 1916.
- 47 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 7, Neurath to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), Constantinople, 14 October 1915; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 7, Lichtheim to Louis Brandeis, Constantinople, undated.
- 48 The reportage had been published first in the semi-official newspaper of the French government, *Gazette de Lausanne*, under the title of "La Palestine republique Juive" on 17 July 1916. For further information see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Jacobson and Hantke to AA, Berlin, 27 July 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Radovitz to AA, 21 September 1916.
- 49 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Ruppin to AA, Constantinople, 12 October 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Radowitz to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), Constantinople, 16 October 1916.
- 50 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 11, Kühlmann to AA, Constantinople, 16 February 1917; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 11, Warburg to AA, Berlin, undated; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 10, Kühlmann to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), Constantinople, 9 February 1917.
- 51 For examples of such reports, see: **TNA**, FO 371/3053, Dizengoff to FO, "Appeal to the Jewish Communities in the Ottoman Empire," 4 May 1917; **TNA**, FO 371/3055, Sykes to Graham, Cairo, 28 April 1917; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 12, Wedel to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 28 April 1917.
- 52 Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, pp. 388–396.
- 53 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 27 April 1917.

- 54 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 12, Brode to AA, Jerusalem, 5 April 1917.
- 55 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 13, Niemann to Imperial Prussian War Ministry, Constantinople, 22 May 1917.
- 56 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 148.
- 57 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 13, Kühlmann to AA, Constantinople, 5 June 1917.
- 58 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 147.
- 59 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 551/68, Münir to Talat, Jerusalem 15 Nisan 1333 (15 April 1917); for the exemptions implemented against the Jews, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 12, Brode to AA, Jerusalem, 5 April 1917.
- 60 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 13, Lucius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Stockholm, 1 June 1917; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 555/30, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 26 Mayıs 1333 (26 May 1917).
- 61 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 12, Brode to AA (transmitting Thon), Jerusalem, 29 May 1917.
- 62 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 12, Brode to AA (transmitting Thon), Jerusalem, 29 May 1917; **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 12, Kühlmann to AA, Constantinople, 16 May 1917.
- 63 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 12, Brode to AA (transmitting Thon), Jerusalem, 29 May 1917.
- 64 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 13, Copenhagen Zionist Bureau to Zionist Bureau in Berlin, Copenhagen, 1 June 1917.
- 65 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 558/76, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 24 Mayıs 1333 (24 May 1917).
- 66 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 2 June 1917.
- 67 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 12, Kühlmann to AA, Constantinople, 16 May 1917.
- 68 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 558/2, İzzet to Talat, Jerusalem, 26 Haziran 1333 (26 June 1917).
- 69 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 13, Lucius to Bethmann-Hollweg, 1 June 1915.
- 70 Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, p. 34.
- 71 Aaronsohn, *ibid.*, p. 3.
- 72 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 17, Ruppın to Bernstoff, Constantinople, 9 November 1917.
- 73 For some articles on the situation of the Christian communities in Syria in the pre-War period, see: Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire, Volume II: The Arabic-Speaking Lands*, New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982.
- 74 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 28.
- 75 **HHStA**, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 3 September 1914.
- 76 **HHStA**, PA 12/209, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 January 1915.
- 77 **BOA**, BEO 4332/324896, Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Justice and Sects, 5 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (18 January 1915). For the text of the *firman* see: *Düstur* II/7, p. 207.
- 78 The Armenian Catholicos of Jerusalem was referring to himself in his petition written to Cemal Pasha: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 529/3, Cemal to Talat, 3 Ağustos 1332 (17 August 1916).
- 79 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 15 January 1915.
- 80 **BOA**, DH.EUM 7.ŞB 2/1, Foreign Ministry to Ministry of Interior, 7 September 1914.
- 81 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 19 June 1915.
- 82 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 28 July 1915.
- 83 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Bernstoff to AA, Constantinople, 26 October 1917.
- 84 **BOA**, HR.SYS 2267/34, Talat to Foreign Ministry, 9 Temmuz 1332 (22 July 1916).
- 85 According to the American consul-general, Nakhle Pasha was arrested by the Ottoman authorities with the accusation of conducting certain correspondence with the French Consulate: **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/745, The American consul-general to Morgenthau, Beirut, 17 February 1915.

- 86 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 20 December 1915.
- 87 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 8 March 1916.
- 88 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 507/112, Cemal to Talat, 21 Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (4 December 1915); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 543/72, Cemal to Talat, 5 Kanun-ı Sani 1332 (18 January 1917); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 577/94, Tahsin to Cemal, 13 Şubat 1334 (13 February 1918); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 515/13, Cemal to Talat, 15 Mart 1332 (28 March 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 529/3, Cemal to Talat, 4 Ağustos 1332 (17 August 1917). He lent 10,000 ltq. to the Greek Church of Jerusalem each month on the account of the 4th Army: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 10/17, Cemal to Enver, 18 Haziran 1332 (1 July 1916).
- 89 Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 137.
- 90 For the reports regarding the attitude of the Christian peoples in Syria against the Ottoman government, see: **HHStA**, PA 12/209, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 January 1915; **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Dandini to Burian, Aleppo, 24 June 1915; **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 20 December 1915; **BA-MA**, RM 40/678, Busse to the Chief of the Admiralty, 7 February 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 26 April 1916; **TNA**, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting intelligence from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, Constantinople, 26 June 1918.
- 91 The term “Long Peace” was borrowed from Engin Akarlı’s book of the same title.
- 92 Akarlı, *ibid.*, p. 184.
- 93 **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 1/4, Bekir Sami to Talat, 20 Ağustos 1330 (2 September 1914); **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Phoris to MAE, Cairo, 27 November 1914. According to the account of a French colonel, the number of Maronites was 300,000, the Greeks, 47,000 and the Druzes, 40,000. For further details, see: **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Colonel Fuet to MAE, 23 November 1914.
- 94 In support of the remarks of the governor regarding the outward attitude of the Druze, the British consul in Lebanon reported that he received assurances “from all parts of the Lebanon of the faithfulness of the Druzes.” These remarks demonstrate that the Druze were pro-British in appearance: **TNA**, FO 371/2143, Cumberbatch to Mallet, Beirut, 15 September 1914; but their support to the Ottoman Empire until the last moment of the war proves the governor right.
- 95 Al-Hakim, *Bayrut wa Lubnan*, pp. 124–125.
- 96 **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 1/4, Bekir Sami to Talat, Beirut, 2 Ağustos 1914 (15 August 1914).
- 97 **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 1/4, Bekir Sami to Talat, 20 Ağustos 1330 (2 September 1914).
- 98 **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 1/4, Kaymakam of Zihle to Talat, 12 Ağustos 1330 (25 August 1914).
- 99 **BOA**, DH.EUM.KLM 5/11, Bekir Sami to Talat, Beirut, 12 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (25 November 1915).
- 100 **TNA**, FO 371/2143, Cumberbatch to Mallet, Beirut, 15 September 1914.
- 101 **TNA**, FO 371/2143, Mallet to Grey (transmitting consul Beirut), Constantinople, 2 October 1914.
- 102 **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Picot to DeFrance, Cairo, 5 November 1914.
- 103 **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, DeFrance to Delcasse, Cairo, 9 November 1914; **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Center for Lebanese Renaissance in São Paolo to Delcasse, São Paolo, 30 December 1914.

- 104 For the details of the plans see: **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Defrance, Cairo, 31 December 1914.
- 105 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, 15 March 1915; **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Cote to MAE, Port-Said, 9 January 1915.
- 106 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 453/28, Cemal to Talat, 29 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (12 December 1914).
- 107 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 453/28, Cemal to Talat, 29 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (12 December 1914). A French intelligence report from Lebanon confirms that the Ottoman soldiers who made an assault on the people were punished quickly; **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 868/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Defrance to Delcasse, Cairo, 12 April 1915.
- 108 Cemal to Enver, 27 Eylül 1333 (27 September 1917), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, pp. 697–698.
- 109 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 453/28, Cemal to Talat, 29 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (12 December 1914); **BOA**, DHEUM 4.Şb 1/27, Cemal to Talat, 17 Mart 1331 (30 March 1915). However, the first Muslim governor of Lebanon, Ali Münif, claims in his memoirs that Cemal wanted the abolition of these privileges but that he prevented him from doing this: Taha Toros, *Ali Münif Bey'in Hatıraları*, İstanbul: İSİS Press, 1996, p. 71.
- 110 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 7 April 1915.
- 111 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 19 June 1915.
- 112 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 14 May 1915.
- 113 **BOA**, MV 241/67, 22 Temmuz 1331 (4 August 1915).
- 114 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Hohenlohe-Langenburg to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 29 July 1915.
- 115 The German ambassador in Istanbul had reported the German policy approximately four months before the appointment of Ali Münif Bey: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 7 April 1915.
- 116 For the whole of the speech, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 494/90, Ali Münif to Talat, Cebel-i Lübnan, 12 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (25 October 1915); similar remarks were conveyed by the Austrian and the German consuls of Beirut. For further details see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 2 October 1915; **HHSStA**, PA 38/366, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 20 October 1915.
- 117 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 2 October 1915; **HHSStA**, PA 38/366, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 20 October 1915.
- 118 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 2 October 1915.
- 119 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 494/90, Ali Münif to Talat, Cebel-i Lübnan, 12 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (25 October 1915); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 5 November 1915.
- 120 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 494/90, Ali Münif to Talat, Cebel-i Lübnan, 12 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (25 October 1915); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 5 November 1915.
- 121 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 494/90, Ali Münif to Talat, Cebel-i Lübnan, 12 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (25 October 1915).
- 122 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 541/49, Ali Münif to Talat, 13 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (26 December 1916).
- 123 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 15 March 1916; in the interim, Habib Pasha Saad and Amin Arslan would be exiled to Asia

- Minor on account of their Francophile sentiments; for details see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 26 April 1916.
- 124 **BOA**, DH-I.UM 2-12, Ali Münif to Talat, Beirut, 17 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (30 November 1916); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 9 December 1916.
- 125 **BOA**, İ.DUİT, 42/53; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 27 February 1917.
- 126 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 15 March 1916.
- 127 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 27 February 1917.

3 “From a dangerous multitude into a harmless minority”

The treatment of the Armenians in Syria

While Cemal Pasha was ruling in Syria, the deportation of the Armenians in Anatolia was decided upon. During the transportation process, a great number of them were sent to Syria for resettlement. Therefore, the Syrian land has a special place in the history of the Armenian deportations and a detailed analysis of the policy of Syria's de facto absolute ruler toward the Armenian refugees is of great importance both for understanding the nature of Cemal's rule in Syria and for the clarification of discussions on the Armenian question. There were some similarities between Cemal's treatment of the Armenians and the policies he implemented with regard to the other Syrian communities. As in his approach to Arabism and Zionism, Cemal tried to increase the state's control over the Armenians by partitioning them into small groups in Syria. In this way, the Armenians would be prevented from becoming a potential political threat to “the unity of the Ottomans” in the future. Although this policy was a kind of ethnic engineering, it is noteworthy that Cemal did not aim at the Turkification or Islamization of the deported Armenian community, as generally claimed in the existing literature. His actions were mainly an attempt to “shape” the conduct of the Armenians in the interests of Ottoman unity.

In spite of the abundance of academic studies on the Armenian deportations, the scarcity of studies on the Syrian part of the deportation process in comparison to the incidents that took place in the Anatolian provinces makes it important to develop a complete understanding of the subject. As will be analyzed below, most of the academic studies on this subject either minimize the Syrian part of the process or misinterpret it out of political concerns. Therefore, before proceeding to an analysis of the treatment of the Armenians in Syria by Cemal Pasha, this chapter will set out to evaluate the existing literature on the topic. After that, the analysis will be restricted to the opinions and activities of Cemal Pasha regarding the resettlement of the Armenian refugees in Syria, primarily with reference to the dispatches by regional Ottoman officials, the memoirs and diaries of the deportees, and the reports of local consuls. Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that telegrams sent by the Ottoman officials in the region are rarely used in studies on the Armenian deportations. Unlike the existing literature, this study will attempt to use these

documents both to demonstrate the differences among the Ottoman bureaucrats regarding their attitude toward the Armenian deportees and to understand Cemal's policy regarding the Armenians.¹

Evaluation of the existing literature on the Armenian question

The project of deporting a great portion of the Armenian population from the various parts of Anatolia to eastern Mesopotamia and Syria has stirred an long-lasting debate because of the massacres that occurred during the deportation. The mainstream of historical studies, referencing the German Holocaust against the Jews, claims that this process amounted to a genocide against the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire by the CUP to "purify" the population in Anatolia and that it was planned long before the actual orders for the deportation were issued.² As summarized by Hilmar Kaiser, such studies assume "a thoroughly organized and thoroughly executed scheme."³ Other studies that can be placed in the same category endeavor to demonstrate that the relocation of the Armenians was a consequence of the ethnic engineering of the CUP. According to this view, the Unionists planned to cleanse Anatolia of non-Turk elements to create a motherland for the Turks.⁴

Kaiser's assessments of the problems with these studies can be applied to both of these approaches:

This paradigm treats the Ottoman Empire as a single unit with a command structure under CUP control. Importantly, the command structure had supposedly two layers, one official and one more secretive including trusted party members. The latter was used to provide for a degree of deception by countermanding official orders with secret ones that effectively annulled the former. Moreover, the government engaged in a policy to destroy incriminating evidence by ordering the destruction of documents deemed dangerous. At times, the government even ordered the production of fake reports.⁵

In addition, such studies rarely make use of the dispatches of the Ottoman officials in the periphery of the empire who displayed resistance to the policies of the central government in diverse ways. This deficiency casts considerable doubt on the argument for the strict control of the process by the center. As will be shown below, Cemal's distance from and resistance to the policies implemented by Talat regarding the Armenians demonstrate that there was a significant divide in the Ottoman cabinet regarding the treatment of the Armenians. Moreover, Kaiser's discussion of the first relocation movement – of the Armenian population in Zeitun – seems quite convincing with regard to the problems of these theories about ethnic engineering and prior planning:

The case of Zeitun, however, demonstrates that no prior planning existed to replace the local Armenians with Muslim settlers. Far from being part

of a central government scheme, the limited settlement of Muslim refugees was the result of local initiatives. It was implemented without the prior consent of the central authorities, without budgetary allocations, and against some objections of the Ministry of Interior. The fate of the Armenian deportees from Zeitun and other places demonstrates an absence rather than the existence of preparations. Coordination and planning entered the picture in May and June 1915. It was a response to the ensuing chaos along the deportation routes and in the destination areas. The incoming reports, like those from Aleppo, forced the central authorities to implement some degree of coordination while insisting on pushing through at any cost the deportation scheme, which they had now adopted.⁶

On the other hand, many "pro-Turkish" academics who have dealt with this subject have claimed that the deportation of the Armenians prevented a general uprising of the Armenians in the rear of the Ottoman army. As demonstrated by Kaiser, these authors characterize the local uprisings of the Armenians in Van and Zeitun as directed by a revolutionary Armenian committee. However, at least for Zeitun, "this conspiracy theory lacks support from the records of the Ottoman 4th Army. No imminent rising was anticipated; people were deported for other reasons. The rebellion thesis ignores those."⁷

As for Cemal's treatment of the Armenians, the picture seems quite ambiguous in the existing studies. To be more specific, even the most elaborate studies on the subject tend to neglect Cemal's intervention in the settlement of the Armenian refugees. Raymond Kévorkian, who wrote a voluminous book (1,037 pages) on the Armenian question, dedicated only six pages to Cemal Pasha's activities. Half of this was spent explaining Cemal's alleged plans to establish an independent state in Syria under his own leadership. Even though he accepts Cemal Pasha's better treatment of the Armenian deportees, Kévorkian attributes this peculiar position of Cemal Pasha in the Armenian deportation process to his ambitions of independence in Syria. According to this view, Cemal had to get the consent of the Entente to achieve his goal and, therefore, he treated the Armenians better than did other Ottoman officials.⁸ Donald Bloxham's study summarizes the same claims in three pages.⁹ However, these authors fail to explain why Cemal Pasha made many enemies among leading Arabs with his tough policies against the Arabist opposition movement, when they would have been an important base for his alleged separationist policies in Syria. Cemal's calculations on his position in the post-World War empire are probably more useful for understanding the political aspect of his treatment of the Armenians. Another problem with these studies is their overemphasis on the year 1915, to the neglect of the settlement processes of 1916 and 1917. Moreover, these authors do not concern themselves with the remarks in Cemal Pasha's memoirs regarding the Armenian question, at least not as

research questions. But tackling these remarks is necessary for academics investigating this subject.

Taking another approach, Fuat Dündar claims that Cemal had a different project of ethnic planning in mind. He interprets the pasha's distribution of the Armenians in the various districts of Syria as part of a policy of balancing Arab nationalists in Syria with the Armenian deportees. Aleppo, the new center of deportation, is depicted by Dündar as the center of Arab nationalism. In fact, however, this city was the weakest place in Syria with regard to the development of the Arabist movement. In this context, he attributes Cemal's conflict with the CUP leaders in Istanbul to the conflict between his population designs in Syria and those of the central government regarding the population in Anatolia.¹⁰ However, Dündar is not able to document his claims with any materials from Cemal Pasha himself. Moreover, the number of the Armenians settled in Syria was too few to balance the Arabs there. As Cemal always repeated in his telegrams, his aim was to "transform the dangerous Armenian multitude [*külliyyet*] into harmless minorities [*cüziyet*]."¹¹ The section in Dündar's book regarding Cemal Pasha, like the others discussed above, is very slight, at only four pages.¹²

Moreover, as will be demonstrated below, most of the Armenians were first resettled in the countryside. If Cemal had intended to balance Arab nationalism with the Armenian refugees, then he would have housed them in city centers instead of sending them to the villages. Apart from this, Dündar's argument contradicts his general approach. He depicts the CUP in his book as a single body disseminated throughout the Ottoman realm, one that continued the same policies under the leadership of Talat Pasha. When he is assessing Cemal Pasha's treatment of the Armenians, however, he changes his model and begins to claim that Cemal Pasha and Talat Pasha had different ethnic designs. Finally, Dündar's book suffers from the historian's fallacy: It implies that the CUP leaders were aware that, following World War I, the Syrian provinces would be lost by the Ottoman Empire and Anatolia would be the motherland of the Turks.¹³

As for the "pro-Turkish" account of the deportations, in recent years these academics have paid special attention to Cemal Pasha's good treatment of the Armenians.¹⁴ The problem of this approach, however, lies in their effort to defend the CUP's activities regarding the Armenians, rather than setting out to investigate Cemal Pasha's policies and intentions. As a result, these studies transgress the boundaries of academic discourse and become merely defensive. Although they refer to the losses of the Armenians from time to time, when one reads these works, one gets the impression that the deportation process took place without harming a single Armenian. Like the "pro-Armenians," they also neglect the conflict and factionalism among the CUP leaders and their local representatives regarding the treatment of the Armenians, which will be demonstrated below in detail.

Cemal Pasha, Talat Pasha, and the Armenian deportations

As emphasized above, as with the aims of his policies on Zionism and the Christian clergy, Cemal strove to transform the Armenians into ideal Ottomans who would be conducted by the state, rather than abandoning them to their fate in the desert. Therefore, far from being in harmony with Talat regarding the measures taken for the Ottomanization of the other communities, like Arabs, Christians, and Jews, he clashed with Talat over the state's Armenian policy. Thus, Cemal's policy on the Armenians cannot be understood in its context unless an analysis of the similarities and differences between him and Talat and the reasons behind his different treatment of the deportees is undertaken. Indeed, Cemal and Talat represented two different cliques within the body of the CUP regarding the treatment of the Armenians during the deportations. Many indications of this division can be identified. In particular, the evaluations of German officials conveyed in the following sections offer significant proof of this gap. Similarly, the Ottoman and German records that will be detailed below make it clear that the local bureaucracy in Syria was also divided between "pro-Armenians" and their opponents.¹⁵

Cemal's contemporary remarks regarding the issue in telegrams and his memoirs and the testimony of the diaries and memoirs of other actors in these events offer sufficient data to understand the main principles of his policy and his differences from Talat's clique. In this regard, the most elaborate analyses were made in his memoirs. Defending the necessity of the Armenian deportations, Cemal begins his assessment by analyzing the reasons for the deportation. He accuses the Great Powers, principally Russia, of driving a wedge between the Turks and the Armenians, giving evidence of the good relations between the two nations through the historical periods prior to the intervention of the powers in the internal issues of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶ He then claims that he did not know "on what grounds the Government saw itself to deport all Armenians," noting that he "neither took part in the negotiations at Constantinople" nor was consulted. He claims that he first learned of the decision from the government's proclamation to the *vilayets* that "all the Armenians were provisionally to be deported to Mesopotamia, where they were to remain until the end of the war."¹⁷ As the third man in the CUP and as a member of the acting government, it seems impossible that such a crucial issue was decided upon without letting Cemal know about it. However, there is no evidence that he was informed. Presumably, before the start of the decision-making process, they engaged in some form of negotiation and Cemal gave his consent to the deportation of the Armenians in one way or another. Furthermore, the statements in the telegrams sent by him do not make sense on the assumption that he was not informed about the deportations. However, he did not approve of the massacres that took place during the transportation process and always complained about the dreadful organization of the deportations.¹⁸

Cemal's attitude about the deportations from Zeitun, Dörtyol, Haçin, and Adana also demonstrates his differences from Talat Pasha and his clique. According to Grigoris Balakian, who was deported to Zor, Cemal made the following remark about the deportations from this region to the catholicos of Cilicia, Sahag II, in a train station when he was returning from Istanbul to Syria:

During the deliberation over this matter in the council of ministers, I tried very hard to argue that instead of deporting and exiling the entire Armenian population only the writers, intellectuals, and Armenian political party leaders – say fifteen or twenty people from each town – should be exiled. I felt that the helpless common people should be spared, but I am sorry to say that I was not able to make my voice heard.¹⁹

When his military concerns are taken into account, this remark seems to make some sense. Cemal's primary concern regarding the Armenian deportation was the emergence of "any interference with the line of communications" that "might have the gravest consequences for the Canal Expedition." Therefore, according to his memoirs, he was opposed to the deportation of the Armenians of Anatolia into Syria, and proposed instead "to settle the Armenians in the interior of the provinces of Konia, Angora, and Kastamuni." However, he claims, he could not oppose an act of parliament.²⁰ His claims regarding his military concerns seem to be true, when his meticulous attitude toward the canal expedition and his contemporary telegrams are taken into account.²¹ In the same vein, in a telegram, he urged Enver to end the deportation of the Armenians from Anatolia as fast as possible to keep the railroad open for military transport.²²

However, with regard to his attitude toward the deportations as such, Cemal's remarks in his memoirs regarding the decision-making process demonstrate that he was not an opponent of the decision to deport the Armenians:

If I had been in Constantinople at the time and taken part in the discussions, knowing what was happening in the rear of the Army in East Anatolia, should I not have supported the deportations? This question I cannot now answer. But I assume that my friends, in reaching such a drastic decision as this wholesale deportation which roused the indignation of the whole civilized world, must have been actuated by weighty reasons. I have no doubt that in the publications which are shortly to appear they will satisfy our doubts and curiosity.

I am certainly firmly convinced that the Armenians planned insurrections which endangered the rear of our Army in the Caucasus and which might under certain circumstances have completely destroyed it. Consequently my friends held it more expedient to transfer the whole Armenian nation to another region where they could do no harm, than

to expose the whole Ottoman Empire to a catastrophe which would have involved Russian occupation of the whole of Asia Minor.²³

Cemal's contemporary remarks also show that he saw the concentration of the Armenians as dangerous in any region of the empire. In a telegram he sent to the governor of Aleppo, Cemal explicitly expresses his concern about the concentration of large numbers of Armenians in Marash.²⁴ He warned the governor of Marash that the first Armenian uprising against the state emerged in that province and that, therefore, the accumulation of Armenians in such a great number there would be dangerous militarily.²⁵

However, Cemal was opposed to the massacres perpetrated against the Armenian convoys. According to Wolff-Metternich, a German official in Istanbul, Cemal told him that the directives about the deportation of the Armenians in the beginning of the process were right, but that later their implementation was badly organized.²⁶ Cemal's own statements also reflect this belief. In one of his telegrams regarding the transfer of the deportees from Aleppo to Zor, Cemal gave voice to the following concerns:

The dispatch of the Armenians [accumulated] in Aleppo to Zor is impossible due to provisioning and habitation concerns ... If they were sent [there], a very crowded Armenian colony would be created in Rakka [Zor] ... Therefore, there is no solution but to send these Armenians to Mousul. [After that] the following problem will arise: the transfer of about 20,000 Armenians [located] in Aleppo to Ra's al-Ayn by train in the winter season and the organization of their transport from there to Mousul humanely [will be difficult]. The needed trains for this must be reserved until Ra's al-Ayn, and from Ra's al-Ayn transport means, consisting of cars and pack animals [*mekkarî*], must be prepared, and in between Ra's al-Ayn and Mousul, it is necessary to create places for [temporary] accommodation and to provide in those places provisioning and tents ... I beg to ask [*istirham etmek*] to start the transport of the first convoys of the Armenians following [my] inspection that will convince my humble self of the completion of these preparations.²⁷

Cemal regarded the Armenians as citizens of the Ottoman Empire.²⁸ As touched upon in the previous chapters, he ascribed great importance to making the empire's citizens aware of the strength of the state. Therefore, his frustration can also be interpreted in terms of his concern to show the citizens that the state was not weak.

Quite the opposite of Cemal, Talat connived the dispatching of the Armenians to the desert despite knowing the dangers that would arise in the process. In one of his speeches at the Ottoman Parliament regarding the settlement of Muslim refugees from the Balkans in the Ottoman territories, Talat opposed the suggestion of the Aydın deputy Emanuelidis Efendi on settling these people in the "empty lands from Üsküdar to Basra." He argued,

"If we had sprinkled those refugees, sending them, as they [Emanuelidis] said, to the desert, all of them would die there."²⁹ Judging from this speech, Talat was aware of the destiny of the Armenians when they were exiled to the south of Aleppo.

As for the political reasons behind Cemal's lenient treatment of the Armenian deportees, it is claimed in the studies by Bloxham and Kévorkian that he planned to establish an independent state in Syria and that he wanted to gain the sympathies of the Entente states. Therefore, he showed care toward the Armenians. As stated above, when considering Cemal's attempts to integrate the Syrian realm, this argument seems irrelevant. This claim is largely due to his method of administration in Syria. During his governorate, Cemal was quite independent from the central government. But his policies were somewhat concordant with those of the center. Indeed, as a leader of the ruling party, the CUP, and as a member of the cabinet, he did not need to be controlled by the central government, which supported many of his actions for the sake of the re-formation of the state in Syria. He enjoyed the full confidence of the CUP leaders in İstanbul. However, it seems that the independent character of his rule caused some debates among the Entente states on the possibility of Cemal instigating a rebellion against the Ottoman Empire. The documents on this issue in the British archives, in particular, made some scholars think that Cemal wanted to rebel against the Ottoman Empire and establish an independent state in Syria.³⁰ According to these documents, the Entente states discussed the possibility of offering Cemal Pasha independence in Syria in return for his rebellion against the Ottoman Empire.³¹ There are no remarks or documents in these from Cemal Pasha himself. It is rather a discussion of the possibility of Cemal's rebellion. They discussed the issue and decided that Cemal was not fit to support their designs in the Arab Middle East. Presumably, Cemal was not informed about these plans. German officials were cognizant of these rumors. However, all the German officials in Syria witnessed the loyalty of Cemal Pasha to the Ottoman central government and to the ideals of the Turco-German alliance.³² When the German consul in Damascus showed him a news report from *Le Temps* claiming that Cemal was cooperating with the Entente, Cemal suggested the rumors were deliberately produced to drive a wedge between Turks and Germans, adding: "my countrymen and yours should read them carefully and open their eyes well."³³ The most reasonable explanation was made by Erden on this issue. He explained in his memoirs:

Cemal Pasha thought that the role of Enver Pasha would come to an end after the war. For *Sadrâzam* Talat Pasha, he [always] said, "he [Talat] can best be the leader of the party." Thus, the most suitable one to be grand vizier was nobody but himself.³⁴

Cemal's memoirs also support this allegation. Cemal devoted a chapter of his memoirs to the Armenian question and his efforts to assist the Armenian

deportees and published just when the empire was drawing to an end. He adopted a defensive language and answered the claims of Mandelstam and the American ambassador Morgenthau. Although he did not publish all the chapters of his memoirs in foreign languages,³⁵ he had the Armenian chapter translated into both English and German. Taking these remarks into consideration, it can be concluded that Cemal's political ambitions for the future included a significant role in the creation of the new Turkey. Presumably, he was well aware during wartime that after the conclusion of the hostilities the treatment of the Armenians would be brought to the table both by the Germans and the Entente powers even if the Ottoman side won the war. Therefore, to avoid tarnishing his reputation, Cemal showed extra sensitivity toward the problems of the Armenians.

Dealing with the deportation process

Cemal's attempts to ameliorate the terrible conditions of the Armenians support the arguments given above. Beginning with the arrival of the first convoys in Syria, he actively intervened in the process. As will be seen below, his intervention was quite in line with his general policy of re-forming the state in Syria, converting the Armenians into "harmless" and, thus, loyal citizens of the state, as he had sought to do with the decentralist Arabs, Zionists, and pro-French Christians. Before analyzing his actions, a short summary of the conditions of the Armenians when they arrived at Aleppo will contribute to an understanding of the wider picture.

The first convoys of the Armenian deportees began to arrive in the region for which Cemal was responsible in July 1915. By the beginning of August, according to the German consul, there were Armenians in Aleppo from all parts of Anatolia.³⁶ The deportees had reached the city in terrible circumstances partly due to the harsh conditions on their journey and partly due to mistreatment by gendarmes and brigands.³⁷ Conditions during the deportation were so awful that they had to leave their children in the city centers of Syria hidden under rags³⁸ or they sold them to well-to-do people in the cities to avoid subjecting them to even more certain misery on the journey.³⁹ According to remarks made by a Turkish lieutenant colonel to a German engineer, there were countless children abandoned by their parents on the roads, and these children were adopted by the native families of the towns. The lieutenant and his brother had also adopted a child.⁴⁰ Similarly, the testimony of Yervant Odian, who was also a deportee, regarding the sale of children is more than enough to understand the soul-shattering situation of the deportees:

I saw for the first time, the dreadful, heart-rending trade in children in the camp in Sebil. Arab, Turkish and Jewish women would come from Aleppo in carriages and start going from one tent to another, asking, "Are there any children for sale?" [*Satlik cohjuk var me?*]

Those parents who were wealthy would send these women away with horror, but the poor and the hungry hesitated. That hesitation was enough to begin the haggling.

"Let's let him go" the husband would say, holding his son's hand.

"I'll die before I'm separated from my son," the wife would cry.⁴¹

As a result, the parents would be persuaded that their children would probably die during the deportation and that they should save them, at least, from such a death. Descriptions from Ottoman telegrams also testify to this terrible misery. The governor of Aleppo, Bekir Sami Bey, who was also one of the most important opponents of the deportation of the Armenians, described the situation of the Armenians as follows:

Today, again, [a] convoy of the Armenians from the eastern *vilayets*, consisting only of women and children not older than 12 years, has arrived here. Every two days, such a convoy consisting of women and children turns up here, their numbers varying between 500–1,000 and 3,000 ... As for their settlement, how and where to settle such a great number of the destitute, consisting only of children and women? ... Wretchedness, starvation, and disaster destroy hundreds of these children. Therefore, it is impossible to think that they will survive for a long time.⁴²

This telegram also demonstrates that the Armenians were abandoned to their own fate by the central government. While the convoys of deportees were arriving one after another, the governor, the head of the civil bureaucracy in Aleppo, did not know how many Armenians were to be settled in Aleppo or who would be transported to other destinations. Being unfamiliar with the central government's Armenian policy, Bekir Sami asked for clarification of the main principles of the deportation.⁴³ According to remarks made by the German consul in Aleppo at a later date, the Ottoman state officials were not answerable to their superiors when it came to the Armenians who were struggling to survive and these officials had the right to leave them to die.⁴⁴

As a result of the deteriorating conditions for the Armenians, Cemal Pasha paid a visit to Aleppo to inspect their situation. In Cemal's words, the deportation was poorly organized and the refugees had arrived at Aleppo in squalor (*sefalet içinde*).⁴⁵ Cemal therefore took some precautions to make their situation better. Upon the request of the Armenian catholicos of Aleppo, Cemal ordered 5 metelik (20 pfennig) to be given to adults and 4 metelik (16 pfennig) for children as a daily allowance.⁴⁶ He decided to resettle some families around Aleppo, in agriculturally productive lands,⁴⁷ in consultation with the state functionary Eyyub Bey, who was tasked with organizing housing for the Armenian refugees: 835 of the Armenian families were settled in the Maarre district, 990 in the Bab district, and 2,250 in the Muslimiye (Mesmiye?) district, on condition that the proportion of the refugees would not transcend 10 percent of the total population.⁴⁸ However, the

German consul in Aleppo reported in February 1916 that Cemal's arrangements in Bab had been "torn down" and the Armenians there were sent to Der Zor,⁴⁹ which was then synonymous with death for the Armenians, on account of its remote, desert location.⁵⁰ According to Mustafa Abdulhalık Bey, the governor of Aleppo, this had to be done because of the lack of available agricultural lands that could be allocated to the Armenians.⁵¹ Cemal also calculated the fund required for the easy solution of the problem of the settlement of the Armenians as 11,035,000 qurush and demanded the dispatch of one quarter of this amount as quickly as possible. In his telegram to Talat, Cemal also warned the Minister of Interior to prevent attacks against the Armenians of Van and Diarbekir between Diarbekir and Aleppo.⁵²

Cemal also took protective measures to keep the Armenians in the city centers. He employed artisans from among the deportees in army factories. He used this opportunity to prevent as many Armenians as possible from being sent to the desert. As a result, he came into conflict with the anti-Armenian clique under his rule. In this regard, the pasha clashed with the *kaymakam* of Islahiye, Nusret Bey, over the protection of the Armenians and did not hesitate to dismiss him and the dismissal quickly turned into a crisis between Cemal and Talat, exposing the conflict between them regarding the Armenian deportations. An officer known as Abdülhamid Bey, together with the aforementioned *kaymakam*, was assigned by Cemal to organize keeping the Armenian craftsmen in Islahiye for employment within the body of the 4th Army.⁵³ According to a report from Abdülhamid, Nusret was quite inattentive (*gafilane*) to the Armenian deportees. Cemal therefore ordered the governor of Adana to dismiss the *kaymakam* without informing Talat, the Minister of Interior and head of the civil bureaucracy. He also did not give any information to the governor of Adana regarding Abdülhamid's assignment. Siding with the *kaymakam*, the governor, Hakkı, complained to Talat about Cemal, claiming that Nusret was working zealously (*gayretle*) in the transport of the Armenians. Cemal, on the other hand, claimed that Nusret was dismissed because of his neglectful attitude.⁵⁴

A telegram from Şükrü Bey, the director of immigration issues, who was sent by Talat to Aleppo to organize the transport of the deported Armenians in Aleppo, makes the reasons for the conflict quite clear. As Talat's man, Şükrü first stated that the *kaymakam* was conducting the transportation effort with great success (*gayet muvaffakiyetle*). According to him, Abdülhamid claimed that the *kaymakam* did not give due consideration to the issue of the deportation and did not want to work at nights. On the other hand, the *kaymakam* stated that Cemal's officer intervened in the issues of the transportation with complete authority and gave orders to the *kaymakam*. He stated that the officer delayed the deportation of 8,000 Armenians from Islahiye on the pretext that they were artisans and would be employed within the body of the army. Şükrü wrote that, with the dismissal of Nusret Bey, the organization of all activities regarding the deportees was taken over by Cemal's officer. Therefore, new officials should be sent to Islahiye. Şükrü also

wrote to the 4th Army requesting information on how many artisans the army needed, most probably in order to prevent such actions.⁵⁵ These remarks from Şükrü demonstrate the political polarization between Cemal and Talat on the Armenian deportation. The phrases in the telegrams also clarify the difference. As can be understood from these communications, Cemal, Şükrü, and Talat understood different things from “working with effort” on the deportation of the Armenians. It was something of a buzzword that had different meanings for each side. Moreover, Şükrü’s telegram demonstrates the mutual distrust between both sides.

The testimony of the Armenian deportees also indicates that, during the transportation process, Cemal protected the Armenians under the pretense that he needed the Armenian artisans within the body of the army. Yervant Odian described his registration with 300 other Armenian families as artisans in the 4th Army in the following words:

The tent we were staying in belonged to a family from Bardizg. “We’re going to Syria,” said the head of the family, “just like 300 other families.”

“How did you arrange that?”

“Djemal Pasha [*sic*] issued an order for artisans to be separated and sent to Sham [Damascus]. As artisans we’re going there to work in government factories. They are especially looking for tailors, shoemakers, metalworkers, carpenters and weavers.”

“Are all the 300 families artisans?”

“The majority are artisans, but there are some who’ve no trade at all, but who have succeeded in registering as artisans.”

“How ... ?”

“By bribery or deception.”

Indeed many men who had registered as tailors, sat in their tents from morning till night, learning how to thread needles and to sew from their wives.⁵⁶

As will be detailed below, while he was settling the Armenians in the cities of Syria, Cemal would again come into conflict with some of the civil bureaucrats who disapproved of the improvement of the conditions of the Armenians.

Aside from his efforts to ameliorate the conditions of the Armenians during the transportation, Cemal also endeavored to reduce the number of deaths from epidemics and the assaults of tribes and bandits. Since the spread of diseases carried the risk of the infection among the army,⁵⁷ Cemal did his best to forestall epidemics in his territory. Secondly, as stated in the previous section, he avoided staining the reputation of the 4th Army with the rumors of the Armenian massacres. Instead, he intended to keep the Armenians alive and make them into ideal citizens, integrating them into Syrian society. Therefore, Cemal Pasha mobilized all possible means to stop the spread of epidemics among the Armenians.

When the epidemics among the Armenians began, he first issued a military order to the officials under his rule in Aleppo to transport the deportees to their ultimate resettlement places as quickly as possible. He also ordered the evaluation of the Armenians before sending them to their ultimate settlement destinations. If they were sick, they were to be detained and treated in hospitals.⁵⁸ Two Armenian doctors, Hachik Bogosyan and Toros Ovacikyan, were assigned to this job.⁵⁹ Before the departure of the trains, the police conducted a search with a doctor in the cars and those who were suspected of infection were not allowed to travel to another place regardless of their age.⁶⁰ During this period, Talat ordered the governor of Syria to guard against the spread of epidemics. However, he also urged the governor to transport the deportees as quickly as possible to prevent the spread of disease in the cities. He did not mention any treatment for them.⁶¹ The strong difference in their approaches to the threat of epidemics brought about by the Armenian refugees can be seen as a reflection of the broader differences between Talat and Cemal in their policies toward the Armenians.

Efforts to fight the epidemics were maintained after the settlement of the deportees, too. The Armenians resettled in the cities benefited from these advantages.⁶² However, the situation in villages was very bad. As described in the diaries of Vahram Dadrian, "It has been only three months since the Armenians settled here, but our [the Armenians'] cemetery is much bigger than that of the Circassians, who have lived here for half a century."⁶³ Almost all these people had died from disease. However, this was not a deliberate act by the government authorities in Syria to cause the death of all the Armenians. As will be explained in Chapter 7, with the beginning of the war, the Syrian realm experienced a scarcity of physicians, since almost all of the foreign hospitals there were shut down and their physicians were deported. Therefore, there were simply no physicians available to go to the villages to treat the sick and, as a result, the epidemics caused the death of a great number of Armenians in rural areas. According to a report from the Austrian consul, by the time a decision was made to relocate the Armenians to the city centers, approximately three-quarters of them had died because of the epidemics and famine.⁶⁴

In addition to his struggle to protect the Armenians from total destruction by disease, Cemal also inflicted severe punishments on those who mistreated the Armenians during the transportation process. The best-known case in this regard was the execution of the Circassian Ahmed and his friend Halil, who killed the celebrated Armenian deputies Zohrab and Vartkes Efendis. These two deputies were arrested in Istanbul and sent to Diarbekir to be court martialed. However, during their journey they were assassinated by the Circassian gang leaders Ahmed and Halil.⁶⁵ The attacks took place in the area of the 4th Army. Therefore, Cemal enthusiastically pursued them. When they were caught in Karahisar, Cemal sent special officers to take them to Damascus.⁶⁶ They were captured and brought to Damascus to be judged in the court martial. The court sentenced Ahmed to death and the verdict was

implemented the next day.⁶⁷ Halil was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. But Cemal rejected the decision of the court regarding Halil and demanded a repeat of his trial.⁶⁸ Like his friend, he was executed.⁶⁹ According to Falih Rıfki Atay, Cemal had made an effort to save the Armenian deputies from death. When they departed from İstanbul, Cemal had asked Talat to send them to Lebanon to render them “harmless.” However, Talat insisted that they must be tried before the court martial and, as a result, they were killed.⁷⁰

Similarly, robbers who assaulted Armenian deportees were severely punished when their attacks were reported to Cemal. In the report of a German official, it is stated that Cemal had many robbers hanged.⁷¹ A detailed report was transmitted by the Aleppo consul on the issue: When Cemal Pasha arrived at Aleppo at the end of 1915 to examine the conditions of the Armenians, he found that Kurdish bands had assaulted the Armenians in the concentration camp at Islahiye and slaughtered children and women. Cemal Pasha assigned 12 of his own guardsmen to capture the attackers. They energetically pursued the bandits and, as a result, some of them were brought to Aleppo and hanged there.⁷²

All in all, during the transport of the Armenian refugees Cemal wholeheartedly strove to improve their conditions. However, this does not mean that everything was corrected after the arrival of the Armenians in the territory of the 4th Army. A considerable number of the Armenians continued to die after their arrival at their permanent settlement places, mostly because of the conditions prevailing in Syria brought about by famine, epidemics, and a lack of physicians, as analyzed in detail in Chapter 7.

Settlement of the Armenian deportees in the 4th Army's territory

Aside from dealing with the tremendous problems that the deportees faced during transport, Cemal focused his main efforts on the resettlement of the deportees in as organized a manner as possible. In this regard, he decided to send a considerable number of the refugees from Aleppo to Damascus to resettle them in Hauran and East Jordan. He marked Damascus as the second center of distribution, after Aleppo, for the Armenians due to be resettled in the 4th Army zone. In this section, the analysis will concentrate on Cemal's own efforts toward the resettlement of the Armenian refugees deported to his territory. As will be detailed below, his main policy was to integrate the Armenians into Syrian society, dividing them into small groups and thereby transforming them “from a dangerous multitude (*külliyyet*) into harmless minorities (*cüziyyet*).”⁷³

Following the decision to relocate some deportees to the 4th Army region, the first two convoys reached Damascus in the third week of August 1915. According to the Austrian consul, among those deportees there were Armenians from many towns in eastern Anatolia. While the first convoy arrived in Damascus by foot, the second was transferred there by train. After a short stay in Damascus, they were sent to their permanent settlement places, Mesmije in

Hauran, Salt and Kerak in East Jordan. All of them were transferred to their new destinations by train.⁷⁴ According to the testimony of Oppenheim, most of the Armenians who arrived in Damascus by foot reached the city with pack animals and carriages under the guard of gendarmes.⁷⁵

The great majority of the refugees consisted of weak men, women, and children. The consul estimates that the other men were either separated from their families and sent to another place or massacred because of their resistance to the deportation. The police did not allow the refugees to communicate with the native people of Damascus. A very small number of them, however, evaded the police and took refuge with their co-religionists.⁷⁶ They were resettled in villages entirely populated by Muslims. According to the Austrian consul in Beirut, the children were separated from their families and Islamized. The results of appeals by priests to stop this practice remained inconclusive.⁷⁷ The seriousness of the conversions and their meaning in the context of Ottoman politics will be analyzed below separately.

The arrival of refugees in Damascus continued into September, too. According to a report from the Austrian consul, between 1–15 September, 22,000 Armenian refugees arrived in Damascus from Marash, Antep, Tarsus, Alexandretta, Aleppo, and Adana. Because of the lack of appropriate places for them in Damascus, according to the consul, the great majority of them were settled in Salt, Kerak and Maan.⁷⁸ By January 1916, according to the figures given by the governor of Damascus, the number of refugees distributed throughout the province of Syria was around 60,000. Some 20,000 of them were settled in Hama, 27,000 in Hauran, 8,500 in Kerak, 1,100 in Nebk, 300 in Duma, 180 in Kunaytra, 150 in Baalbek, and 25 in Vadi al-Ajem. The remaining 3,000 were settled in the villages of Damascus.⁷⁹ This means that a third of them were settled in the city centers.

Again, the great majority of the refugees consisted of women and children. The consul stated that the refugees were treated like prisoners in Damascus and that nobody was allowed to communicate with them. However, most of them were able to run away to take refuge with their co-religionists.⁸⁰ The same restrictions were imposed by Cemal Pasha in their permanent resettlement places. They were prohibited from leaving them without permission as long as the war continued. They would be able to leave the boundaries of the *kazas* that they were assigned to for a determined time only and only if they could provide a valid reason.⁸¹ However, in practice the situation was less restrictive. According to the personal accounts of Armenian deportees, it is clear that they could escape to Damascus to make money to support their families.⁸²

Cemal's anti-interventionist attitude revealed itself in this case, as well. He was strongly opposed to any actions that would bring prestige to a foreign power, particularly the intervention of representatives of foreign states in issues regarding the deportees. He complained about the American consuls in Syria to their ambassador via the Minister of War and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, since they were interfering with the internal issues of the

empire.⁸³ According to Cemal, these consuls secretly provided the deportees with funds and facilitated their communication with the deportees in eastern Anatolia.⁸⁴ Taner Akçam maintains in his book that the Ottoman government did not organize any assistance efforts to relieve the Armenians and deliberately prevented foreign states from doing so, either.⁸⁵ However, the state's motives behind blocking foreign states' intervention seem different. As explained in this study, during the war there was a general sensitivity among the Ottoman authorities to the activities of foreign states, including relief efforts, since such activities made the Ottoman government appear weaker in the eyes of its citizens and were seen by the Ottoman officials as a means for foreign powers to establish their influence in the empire. As will be seen in Chapter 7, Cemal had also resisted American aid for Lebanon for some time. But, as will be demonstrated below, he ultimately agreed to allow American and German aid to be distributed by Ottoman officials.

In the same context, Cemal also intervened in the case of Armenian workers employed by German engineers in railroad construction, claiming that those workers were selected from among the refugees to protect the Armenians.⁸⁶ Subsequently, Cemal had to delay their deportations on the order of the War Ministry, exiling them only after the completion of their construction work.⁸⁷ Furthermore, many Armenian craftsmen employed in the railroad company's construction efforts were sent into exile as part of the deportation of the Armenians. Upon the slowdown, the construction of the Amanos and Taurus Tunnels, the company requested these craftsmen from the army, which gave its consent.⁸⁸

When the number of deportees still not settled reached 200,000, Cemal demanded a temporary halt in the deportation process to give him time to deal with the problems of the settled and not yet settled Armenians in Syria. He explained in a telegram that the deportees who had already arrived could not be resettled until winter. He recommended that Armenians currently in transit be temporarily held in regions close to the railroad and where food-stuffs could be easily supplied. Otherwise, it would be difficult to prevent overcrowding (*izdiham*) among the refugees and to protect the army from the epidemic diseases brought by these convoys.⁸⁹ According to a report from the German Embassy on 18 December 1915, the deportations had been suspended because of the approach of winter.⁹⁰ In order to organize the settlement of the already deported Armenians, on 11 November 1915, a meeting was held with Cemal Pasha, Şükrü Bey, İsmail Canbulat, and the governor of Aleppo in attendance. At this meeting, they decided to accept for permanent settlement 5,000 Armenians who were en route to Pozantı and to make the other refugees spend the winter in appropriate temporary sites. Those who still had not been expelled from their home regions would be left there temporarily. After that, there would be no transfer of deportees to the south of Aleppo.⁹¹ Upon the instructions of the commander of the 4th Army the vice-governor of Damascus demanded 40,000 ltq. from Istanbul to settle the Armenians before winter or to construct temporary places for them to stay during winter.⁹²

As for the conditions of the Armenians in Damascus and in their permanent settlement places, they were exposed to countless miseries at first. According to a report from the Austrian consul in Damascus on 7 November 1915, the refugees were deprived of everything in their permanent settlement places. Until the Ottoman government delivered their belongings, they would remain without cattle or seeds, and under no circumstances could they begin any work. They were unprotected and exposed to great miseries with the arrival of the seasonal rains. The 1 qurush daily allowance for each person provided by the government was insufficient. Starvation and epidemics were spreading among the deportees quickly. During their stay in Damascus, every day 1 in 100 died from disease. The consul said the great majority of children were given up to Muslims for adoption by their families, and, thus, were saved from starvation and epidemics at the expense of changing their religion.⁹³

The reports of Ottoman officials at the time drew a similar picture. In a telegram, Hulusi Bey, the governor of Syria, harshly criticized the official process (*cereyan-ı resmiyesi*) of the Armenian deportation and settlement, stating “the necessity of prohibiting such movements that could [only] be seen in the Middle Ages” (*bu gibi kurun-ı vusta harekatinun men edilmesi*). He continued, “If the settlement of the Armenians is left to its official process, humanity will not record it with appreciation, since, presumably, a great majority of them [the refugees] will be devastated [if the process continues like this].” With these remarks, Hulusi Bey implicitly accused the government of being responsible for the annihilation of the Armenians. The governor added that Cemal wanted to solve the problem of the Armenian refugees as quickly as possible to avoid tarnishing the region under the responsibility of the 4th Army and dishonoring the Ottoman Empire. Upon the order of Cemal Pasha, Hulusi Bey planned a visit to Hauran and Kerak to see the state of affairs there and to order the Ottoman officials to be more attentive to their jobs. He also demanded money to organize the settlement.⁹⁴ However, approximately a month and a half later, it is clearly understood from a telegram from the vice-governor of Syria that most of the refugees were destitute: They had no shelter – not even a tent – and they suffered from starvation.⁹⁵ The miserable conditions of Syria in wartime stemming from famine must also be taken into consideration while assessing the situation of the Armenians.

In spite of all these unfavorable conditions, in a short span of time, the Armenian deportees were able to restore their living standards in their permanent settlements using their personal skills. For example, as explained in the diaries of Dadrian, immediately after their arrival at Jeresh in Hauran, the Armenians were able to build 8 mills, plant 50 gardens, and create “forty shops where they make their livings as cobblers, gun smiths, comb-makers, felt-makers, farriers, iron-mongers, butchers, etc.” In short, they converted the little village of Jeresh into a burgeoning business town.⁹⁶ The situation was similar in the cities, too. Yervant Odian described the situation in the city center of Hama as follows:

Almost half the shops in the market were in the hands of Armenians. The majority of the Arab shops had been forced to close due to the military call up. There were Armenian grocers, butchers, vegetable sellers, haberdashers and cloth sellers, as well as many barbers, shoe makers, carpenters, dentists, photographers, pharmacists, bakers, tailors, metal smiths and so on. It was the Armenians who first opened photography shops in Hama. The Armenians also opened, for the very first time, two restaurants.⁹⁷

Besides their own endeavors, the humanitarian intervention of Cemal Pasha brought about a considerable improvement in their situations. The Austrian consul in Damascus noted in February 1916 that the Armenians were well settled in the city of Damascus and its villages. Great improvements had been made to the settlement process and, at least, a place of accommodation was created for the refugees. The consul stated that the refugees had the opportunity to engage in agriculture in the villages of Damascus. The daily allowance given to them was raised from 1 qurush to 2 qurush (and to 1.5 qurush for children). Some of the Armenians were employed in the labor battalions assigned to construct the Egyptian railroads. The consul reported this as an improvement in the life conditions of the refugees. Moreover, Cemal also announced in all the newspapers of the country that the government was responsible for the life, honor, and well-being of all the Armenians. In this regard, he executed a gendarmier officer who had mistreated the refugees.⁹⁸

As noted above, in a similar way, Cemal employed the Armenians in the factories of the army to protect them. For this purpose, upon the appeal of the Armenian artisans gathered temporarily in Aleppo awaiting deportation to the villages or to the desert, he established six factories in Aleppo and issued permits (*vesika*) to its workers to manufacture clothing and bedding for the army in return for one loaf of bread and one bowl of soup a day. Thus, they would be saved from the devastating conditions of the desert. According to the American consul, "At the end of the two months, 6,500 women, mostly widows, 3,000 girls, and 650 men and big boys were working in the factories and enjoyed all the immunities thereto belonging."⁹⁹

In most of the consular reports, it is stated that Armenians were recruited and sent to the labor battalions to work on road construction.¹⁰⁰ However, according to personal accounts, the conscription of many Armenians was consistently delayed on the orders of Cemal Pasha. When they first arrived at their ultimate settlement places, the deportees were registered as eligible for military service. Every six months they were collected from the villages and taken to the recruitment offices. But their conscription was delayed each time with an order issued by Cemal Pasha. When the news of the delay reached the villages, the name of Cemal was praised with cheers "and wishes that he might live a long life."¹⁰¹ Presumably, their collection every six months was understood by the consuls as an attempt at conscription.

When the British troops started to advance from the Sinai Desert toward Syria, the treatment of the Armenians entered a new phase. Upon the

approach of the British troops, according to the governor of Syria, many Armenians who had not been recruited in time began to escape to Mount Druze and, from there, to join the armies of the British and the sharif. The governor stated that keeping the Armenians inside Damascus during that delicate time was ill-advised, suggesting that their number inside the *vilayet* was more than 30,000. In addition, the commander of the 4th Army, Mersinli Cemal Pasha, found the relocation of the Armenians from Damascus to the north necessary for military reasons. He also stated that many of the Armenians repeatedly appealed to return to home territories because of provisioning problems. For all these reasons, the governor demanded that the Armenians be allowed to return to their homes.¹⁰² On 29 September 1918, the Austrian consul in Aleppo reported a new wave of deportations due to the approach of the British troops toward Damascus. The consul explained, however, that this time the situation was not like before. Since both the Turks and the Armenians had just overcome the difficulties of the first deportation, the consul continued, they were reluctant to begin another.¹⁰³

A similar process started in Aleppo, too. According to a report from the Austrian consul there, the deadline for applications for return was set as 30 September – one day before the capture of the city by the British forces. The refugees would be able to travel freely on the trains. However, the picture drawn by the consul about the desire of the Armenians to return to their homes was quite different. He stated that very few of the Armenian families wanted to return to their homes for two reasons: first, the fear of incurring the mistrust of the government and, second, an unwillingness to embark on a new journey, especially for those who had seen relative improvement in their economic conditions in Aleppo.¹⁰⁴ However, according to the Austrian consul, the discovery of an arsenal in the city that belonged to the Armenians caused the government to revoke its decision within a week.¹⁰⁵

Cemal Pasha and the conversion of the Armenians to Islam

While the settlement process was underway, Cemal encouraged many of the Armenians to convert to Islam.¹⁰⁶ In the cities and villages, massive waves of forced conversions took place. The conversion process consisted of two components: filing a petition and adoption of a Muslim name. In the view of the German representative in Aleppo, this process was only for show, and it was inconceivable that the Armenians would be Islamicized by these methods.¹⁰⁷ A report from the Austrian consul dated 4 August 1915 states that the Armenian refugees who had been dispersed throughout Syria had been strongly pressured to change their religions. The consul reported that this policy was adopted for better integration of the Armenians with the local people. He pointed out that, in the city center of Hama, many conversions took place among the newly settled Armenians. Many of the deportees occupied with commerce took advantage of the opportunities in the cities, and, in short, their living conditions improved. According to the

consul, they were threatened with exile to the villages if they did not change their religion.¹⁰⁸

The existing literature interprets these conversions as part of the annihilation of the Armenian nation. For example, Taner Akçam maintains that the Islamization process was strictly controlled by the central government.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, as will be demonstrated below, Cemal's own telegrams also suggest that he applied a policy of total conversion toward the Armenians. However, when the implementation of this policy is traced, it is clear that the reality was quite different: it was also a part of Cemal's struggle with Talat's policies regarding the Armenians, and a means of legitimizing Cemal's policy of Armenian settlement.

In a telegram to Talat bearing the date 2 August 1916, Cemal proudly summarizes the essentials of his policy for resettling the Armenians in the Syrian provinces:

I find the only solution is to implement immediately the policy that I followed in Syria, to prevent the gathering of Armenians in Zor in large numbers. I collected these Armenians, who had been transferred in large numbers to Syria on the boundaries of the desert, and provided for their conversion to Islam by virtue of some persons that I have persuaded [*teşvik etmek*], and scattered [*serpmek*] at least a thousand of them to the provinces of Syria, converting them to Islam. I paired off the widowed women with Muslim men and placed their orphans in the orphanages that I have established [to educate] them with Muslim manners [*terbiye*]. I do not send those who insist on their religions to the desert or to the eastern end of the *Vilayet*, and I do not allow them to constitute a majority of the population anywhere. I regard it as a necessity that this policy be implemented in Zor, too.¹¹⁰

In the same context, Cemal states in one of his telegrams to Enver that, in June 1916, in Damascus, Deraa, and Hama, 5,450 Armenians in 945 households (*hane*) converted to Islam and 2,314 in 497 households were settled and the others were provided with suitable living conditions.¹¹¹

However, the Cemal's remarks conveyed in the memoirs of Halide Edib draw another picture and reflect the conversions as a necessity for protecting Armenian children from destruction. His remarks were quite striking:

I had a conversation in the car with Djemal Pasha [*sic*] which was really illuminating. I said: "You have been as good to Armenians as it is possible to be in these hard days. Why do you allow Armenian children to be called by Moslem names? It looks like turning the Armenians into Moslems, and history some day will revenge it on the coming generation of Turks."

"You are an idealist," he answered gravely, "and like all idealists [you] lack a sense of reality. Do you believe that by turning a few hundred

Armenian boys and girls Moslem I think I benefit my race? You have seen the Armenian orphanage. This is a Moslem orphanage, and only Moslem orphans are allowed ... I cannot bear to see them die in the streets."

"Afterward?" I asked ...

"After the war they will go back to their people. I hope none is too small to realize his race."¹¹²

Similar remarks were conveyed by the Spanish consul in Jerusalem:

The Armenian Patriarch, Ormanian, had gone to see him complaining that, in Der'a, the authorities obliged the Armenian refugees there to convert to the religion of Muhammad. The minister told him that, from the investigations made, it turned out that what happened was that some Muslim religious leaders, knowing the state of poverty of the refugees, took advantage of it by offering land, houses, or cash on condition of converting to Islam. His Excellency commented that it was propaganda, identical to what the Christian missionaries do.¹¹³

At this stage, the implementation of the conversion policies has to be analyzed more closely to understand which claim reflects the truth. In this context, the diaries of Dadrian give valuable information about the facts behind the conversion process:

The committee in charge of converting Armenians to Islam arrived here yesterday evening. There are five of them: the Mufti of Irbit; an Armenian named Aram, who was formerly the president of the Ipranosian Company in Mersin; two government officials; and a policeman.

They set up shop at the village hall late last night and summoned all the Armenian *moukhtars* (elders) of the village – every Armenian has a representative – and informed them of the government's decision.

The turbaned hodja of Irbit apparently made quite a long speech, emphasizing that the government is doing us a great favor by converting us, "because when we are all faithful children of the same religion and country, there will be no reason for hatred and resentment."

"I therefore recommend that you accept the government's proposal," the *hodja* concluded. "If you refuse, you should realize that it will be you who suffer in the end."

After this veiled threat from the Muslim clergymen, the Armenian member of the committee spoke, explaining that they have been visiting all the villages of the Hauran over the past two months, converting all the Armenians to Islam.

"The whole thing is nothing but a mere formality," he said "Your name is changed only on paper. Just because you have accepted Islam, no one will ever force you to go to a mosque or to make your daughters marry Turks."

"If that is the case," replied Sarko the butcher, "then let us give you a list of all the Armenians in the village and you can write in an Islamic name for each of them."

"May you live long! After all, that's what we all wanted," exclaimed the members of the committee.¹¹⁴

The following pages of his diaries do not convey anything about any problems that emanated from the conversion to Islam. As can be understood from these diaries, it seems that conversions had a limited effect on the Armenians, as life continued on its normal course for them. They did not have to participate in any Muslim religious practices. The only exception was the burial of a Turkish soldier who died from cholera. The Armenians were assigned to bury this soldier. After the funeral, Dadrian asked a policeman why they had used the Armenians instead of the Arabs or the Circassians to bury a Muslim. He continues: "'What is the difference,' he [the policeman] asked, and shrugged. 'Aren't you Muslims?' Muslims? Yes, that's right ... We had forgotten that."¹¹⁵

However, his remarks about the conversion policies implemented in the cities are quite different. "In Deraa, there have been cases of forced marriages, and in Damascus they circumcised the boys from the orphanage and took them to a mosque." Nevertheless, he evaluates the process as "a great kindness to the Armenians on the part of Jemal Pasha" since he saved the Armenians from total extermination on the order of Constantinople.¹¹⁶ Similarly, Yervan Odian's testimony demonstrates the existence of two cliques regarding the treatment of the Armenians in Syria, and the local, dissenting officials asked the Armenians to convert for the sake of appearances and so that they would be able to protect them. It is obvious in his memoirs that the governor of Hama, Feruzan Bey, was ashamed of making such an offer. The governor told a notable Armenian, Nersesian Effendi, that if the Armenians "didn't accept Islam, he wouldn't be able to protect [the Armenians]" and they would probably "suffer very badly."¹¹⁷

As for the situation in Damascus, the Austrian consul gave some details about the enforced Islamizations in the city without touching upon the seriousness of the conversion practice. He stated that the situation was comparatively better in the provincial capital, since the Ottoman officials were sensitive to the reaction of the foreign diplomats. However, the consul stated that, in the first week of August 1916, all the refugees were arrested and those who announced their conversion were released; the others were exiled to villages. These coercive measures were only applied to the Gregorians; the Catholics and the Protestants had immunity from such actions.¹¹⁸ However, in a report from the same consul dated 28 November 1916, it is stated that these policies of conversion were, commendably, abandoned after a short span of time. The consul attributed this change of policy to the appointment of Tahsin Bey as governor of Syria and notes that it was clearly his policy. In this context, those who were sent to the villages were recalled and resettled in

the city centers. As stated before, this was a systematic change in the Armenian policy.¹¹⁹ Quite the reverse of the consul's claims, as will be detailed below, the amelioration of the Armenians' conditions was to a large extent due to the settlement process being taken out of the hands of those who had tried to block such improvement and placed under the control of Cemal Pasha within the body of his army.

A report from the German consul makes the issue clearer. The consul discussed the conflict between Talat and Cemal over the relocation of the Armenians. According to remarks reported by the German consul in Damascus from Hüseyin Kazım, who was appointed as the head of the Armenian relief committee established by Cemal Pasha, the government wanted to destroy the Armenians by sending them into desert areas. Cemal, on the other hand, the consul stated, wanted to protect them. However, the consul continued that Cemal could not succeed against the anti-Armenian members of the CUP and the anti-Armenian ambiance of Istanbul.¹²⁰ Most likely, as suggested by Halide Edib, Cemal did not believe that the conversions would change anything in the opinions of the Armenians. His measures in this direction and his telegram above were rather a pretext to halt the anti-Armenian actions of the CUP clique formed around Talat Pasha.

The worst impact of conversions was felt by young girls who were forcibly married to Muslims. A German report in 1919 cabled from Aleppo the following remarks about the soul-shattering conditions of those girls:

The two thousand Armenian girls who were detained in the Turkish harems during the hostilities have been found by the American Red Cross in recent months. The young girls who lived a *harem* life for months have lost every hope of emancipation ... Most of these girls have still not reached 16 years and they are so pitiful that they must be treated in a clinic before they are sent to their dormitories.¹²¹

The Special Commission for the relief of the Armenians

Due to the resistance of the anti-Armenian clique in the Syrian bureaucracy preventing Cemal from taking full authority over the affairs of the Armenians, in the second half of March 1916 Cemal established a special commission under the chairmanship of Hüseyin Kazım (Kadri),¹²² a former member of the CUP and the former governor of Salonika and Aleppo, who had chosen a secluded life in Beirut before the war following his dispute with CUP leaders. The other members of the commission were two retired bureaucrats and the vice-governor of Damascus. The German consul stated that all the members of the commission were renowned for their sound character.¹²³ As stated in the memoirs of Hasan Bey the Circassian, who was appointed as the successor of Hüseyin Kazım, the aim of the commission was to resettle the Armenians from the villages of Hauran to the city centers.

Since they made their living with artisanship, Cemal believed that they could not live in villages and, therefore, decided to transfer them to cities.¹²⁴ The German consul in Damascus interpreted the distribution of the Armenians to the villages as a measure to balance the Arabs with Armenians.¹²⁵ As explained above, Fuat Dündar makes similar claims. However, the numbers of Armenians settled in the Syrian realm were too small to provide any balance with the Arab population. Therefore, the settlement of the Armenians in villages as a balance against the Arabs does not stand to reason.

Furthermore, as part of his new mission, in April 1916 Hüseyin Kazım paid a visit to Hauran and its south, where the Armenians were settled. In Der'a, he first had bread distributed to the Armenians and made a place for bathing and the removal of lice in the hospital. After cleansing their bodies in the hospital, the deportees were transported to various cities where they could find work. In this way, according to the report of the German consul in Damascus, around 700 widows and orphans were relocated to the city center of Hama and employed in a weaving factory there.¹²⁶

However, the resistance of the bureaucracy compelled Hüseyin Kazım to resign after only a short amount of time. In his conversation with Germany's consul in Damascus, he stated that he had become ineffective in his job; his measures were not ignored, but the official authorities also actively worked against his attempts to improve the Armenians' conditions. The deportees that he transported from Der'a to Damascus in accordance with the aim of the commission had been returned again to their former places by the government authorities in Damascus. Finally, the government did not give Hüseyin Kazım enough money for the relocation of the Armenians. He explained to the German consul that he did not believe the Ottoman government sincerely wanted to improve the conditions of the deportees. Rather, he was afraid that the authorities (most likely he meant Talat's faction) wanted to exterminate the Armenians systematically.¹²⁷ It is worth mentioning here that the resistance of the bureaucrats not only arose from their anti-Armenian feelings, but also from the difficult conditions of life brought about by the war, which compelled them to oppose new settlements in their cities. As in the case of Azmi Bey, some officials refused to accept the Armenians into their cities because of the provisioning problems that emerged as a result of famine.¹²⁸

After the resignation of Hüseyin Kazım, Cemal appointed Çerkes Hasan Bey, who was also an opponent of the CUP, in his place.¹²⁹ Hasan Bey arrived at Aleppo on 27 August 1916, and within a few days he started his job. In the beginning, Cemal subordinated Hasan to the CUP organization in Syria, which he created under the presidency of Neşet Bey, the CUP inspector in Syria.¹³⁰ Within the framework of the same body, Ali Kemal Bey, the prosecutor in Homs, was assigned with the same mission for Homs. The name of the organization was Heyet-i Mahsusa (the Special Commission).¹³¹ Neşet was also responsible for the conversion of Armenians to Islam and the provisioning of the converts.¹³² This time, the transport of the Armenian

deportees was put in order: the widows and orphans were given first priority. They would be resettled in the orphanages and widows' houses.¹³³

Like Hüseyin Kazım, Hasan Bey came into conflict with some civil bureaucrats in Syria and met with resistance in his efforts. He started to visit the villages and gather the Armenians to transport them to the cities. However, some disagreements emerged between Hasan Bey and his superiors.¹³⁴ Hence, he complained about Neşet Bey's board to Cemal Pasha. Thereupon, Cemal Pasha dismissed Neşet and subordinated Hasan Bey to the governor of Syria, Tahsin Bey (Uzer).¹³⁵ However, according to Hasan Bey, Tahsin was an anti-Armenian, too. Therefore, he subordinated Hasan to Abdülkadir Bey, the sub-governor of Hauran. Hasan could not work with Abdülkadir, and appealed to Cemal a second time.¹³⁶ This time, Cemal directly attached him to the army, publishing the following military order on 20 October 1916:

1. I regard the wealth, settlement, and subsistence of the Armenian community [*millet*] as a matter of national honor.

2. Hasan Bey in Hauran and Kemal Bey in Homs have been appointed for this job. Since the deportees in Hauran are artisans and since the neighborhood of Hauran does not offer artisans an opportunity to make a living, those [people] will be transported to areas closer to the cities, towns, and *kazas* in Syria and Beirut. This transportation will be conducted in Hauran by Hasan Bey, and will be completed in three months.¹³⁷

Thus, the organization of the Armenian relocation was directly attached to Cemal Pasha. As a result, the following months brought about further improvement in the conditions of the Armenians. According to a report from the Austrian consul, by the end of November 1916 a systematic change had taken place in the treatment of the Armenians. The refugees who were sent to the villages in Hauran and Kerak were transferred to the cities of Syria if they were not still settled there. The consul stated that three-quarters of the Armenians settled in Hauran and Kerak had died from starvation and epidemics. The survivors were at least saved from meeting the same fate. In Damascus, many houses earlier commandeered by the government were allocated to Armenian families. According to the consul, the officials paid attention to the Armenians' subsistence needs. In the same vein, a daily allowance was granted to them and they were provided with badly needed clothes. The adult males and women were offered employment opportunities and the children were given the chance to go to schools. Trustworthy people were deployed to carry out these efforts.¹³⁸

Orphanages for the deportees

As stated before, a great number of Armenian children were left orphans as a result of the atrocities perpetrated by gendarmes and Kurdish and Arab tribes

throughout the deportation process. The care of these children emerged as a vital question. For this purpose, Cemal established orphanages in various cities in Syria. However, most of these orphanages were founded for Muslim children. Regarding the aims of these orphanages, Taner Akçam maintains that they were established to bring up children in compliance with Islamic principles. Thus, the process of the annihilation of the Armenians would be completed through these facilities.¹³⁹ By analyzing the situation in Syria while bearing in mind these generalizing remarks, it will be seen that the process was rather more complex than what Akçam argues.

It is clear in the Ottoman documents that both Enver and Talat paid special attention to the Armenian children. A piece of correspondence between Enver and Cemal on the Armenian orphans demonstrates that the former wanted the Armenian orphans to be mixed with the Muslim children. When Cemal informed him that he was about to establish orphanages in Homs and Hama for the Armenian orphans, Enver “especially requested” him to mix these orphanages.¹⁴⁰ At the same time, Talat also issued orders to the *vilayets* that “the children who are no older than 12 years of age, must be distributed to our [Muslim] orphanages.” If there were no space in the orphanages, then they would be given to well-to-do people to learn the local customs.¹⁴¹ Since he distributed the Armenians to the cities and villages and made them “harmless minorities,” presumably, Cemal did not attribute any meaning to the conversion of children. The testimony of Halide Edib quoted above also indicates that Cemal did not expect any benefit for his nation from the Islamization of a few hundred Armenian children. In any case, a great many of the Armenians had died during the transportation and in its aftermath. Therefore, even if all the Armenians in Syria had been converted, they were a drop in the ocean when compared to the total population of Syria.

Beginning with the arrival of the first convoys in Aleppo, the great number of orphans among the deportees made it necessary to place them in orphanages. According to the American consul in Aleppo, “Thousands of them were running in the streets, or were with relatives and friends in a half-starved condition.”¹⁴² As described by Beatrice Rohner, a Swiss missionary assigned by Cemal to open an orphanage in Aleppo, the children and women were begging in the camp, Mamouret “Hanum, [Lady] bread! Hanum, I am hungry, we did not eat anything today and yesterday.”¹⁴³ At the end of 1915, Cemal allowed Rohner and fellow Swiss missionary Paula Schafer to open orphanages for the settlement of these Armenian children. While Schafer was in charge of providing shelter to the orphans along the Osmaniye–Islahiye railroad line, Rohner took over Aleppo and its surroundings.¹⁴⁴ These two sisters traveled to the villages and concentration camps where the Armenians had been settled and collected the orphans there.¹⁴⁵

As a result of their efforts, by March 1916, 1,250 children were gathered in Aleppo. An Armenian priest, Haron Shiracian, cared for 400 of them, while 250 children were settled in the care of the Gregorian Church. Rohner’s orphanage hosted 600 of the orphans.¹⁴⁶ German and American

consulates also secretly contributed to the establishment, furnishing, and maintenance of the orphanage in Aleppo.¹⁴⁷ However, Rohner's orphanage was attached by Cemal Pasha to the Ottoman government.¹⁴⁸ He provided for the provisioning of the institution, although the materials supplied were not always sufficient. When the orphanage was established, Cemal guaranteed that the administration of the institution would stay in the hands of Rohner.¹⁴⁹

Rohner continued her activities until March 1917. However, beginning from the middle of the year 1916, the Sublime Porte adopted a policy of Ottomanizing foreign orphanages.¹⁵⁰ In August 1916, an inspector was appointed for this job in Aleppo.¹⁵¹ Although her orphanage was attached to the Ottoman government, Rohner's institution was also closed at the beginning of March 1917.¹⁵² It is worth mentioning that, even in December 1915, Mustafa Abdulhalik Bey, the governor of Aleppo appointed by Talat to replace Bekir Sami Bey, the prominent opponent to the Armenian deportations, reported to Talat that it was not permissible to sustain two institutions in Aleppo as Armenian orphanages and advised that these orphans be transported to Constantinople or Anatolia.¹⁵³ In accordance with his early proposal, some of the children housed in this orphanage were sent to Lebanon, while others were transported to various cities in Anatolia. Rohner continued her relief works in Aleppo under the protection of Colonel Kemal Bey, the head of the Ottoman Commissariat in Aleppo, organizing urgent aid issues. According to the German representative in Aleppo, Kemal strove wholeheartedly to ease the miseries of the deportees, and, by employing Rohner, he aimed to use the money she had access to, presumably provided by the American and German consuls, for the benefit of Armenian women and children.¹⁵⁴

As for Cemal's attitude to these activities, his telegrams indicate that he supported the efforts. However, a report sent by the German consul in Damascus clearly demonstrates that Cemal supported foreigners' assistance activities surreptitiously. When the German consul intended to construct a soup kitchen, an orphanage, and a bathroom under the presidency of a German missionary, Hanauer, he went to Cemal Pasha to ask for permission. The conversation between the two was conveyed by the consul as follows:

I informed Cemal Pasha about the plan. He told me under a pledge of secrecy that he personally wants to ease the conditions of the Armenians, but that he received precise orders from Constantinople requesting the prevention of every kind of American and German assistance for the Armenians ... Upon my request to him to do something personally, he ordered the mayor of Damascus in my presence to hire a house and settle the Armenian children there. Cemal Pasha stated that he is ready to accept money from me and to distribute it through the Turkish officials who have gained my trust.¹⁵⁵

The German official Metternich interpreted this decision to mean that the Sublime Porte refused all kinds of foreign assistance regardless of their source.¹⁵⁶

After that, Cemal began to establish orphanages for the Armenian children. In a telegram to Enver, he stated that he was about to complete the opening of two orphanages for the Armenians in Hama and Homs.¹⁵⁷ Another orphanage was put into service in Damascus.¹⁵⁸ The best-known orphanage opened by Cemal was the Ayntura orphanage, which was put under the presidency of the celebrated Halide Edib some time after its establishment. Armenian orphans deported to Syria and Turkish orphans who had immigrated from Erzurum were housed there.¹⁵⁹ A closer look at this institution will help clarify the situation at the Ottoman orphanages.

As understood from the memoirs of Halide Edib, the education at Ayntura was not intended to give the children a religious consciousness. The activities in the institution were quite secular. Halide Edib does not describe any religious ceremony conducted in the orphanage. Rather, it is obvious in her memoirs that the children were aware of their own national and religious identities. Among the activities conducted in Ayntura, she mentioned the creation of a music band, the improvement of the physical conditions of the orphanage, and the treatment of sick children. The children were not taken, for example, to the mosque and were not circumcised. The only act of Islamization affecting those children was their renaming with Muslim names. There is no evidence for, say, circumcision in the other Ottoman orphanages in Syria, either. If such an action had been undertaken, the consuls, who reported almost all the details of the treatment of the Armenians, would have sent reports about it. Similarly, the diaries and memoirs that were dealt with in researching this volume did not convey anything about it. The only exception to this are the rumors that reached Dadrian's ears about the circumcision of orphans in Damascus and their being brought to a mosque.¹⁶⁰ However, if such an action had taken place, it would presumably have been reported by a consul from the provincial capital of Syria. Therefore, it is doubtful that those orphanages really aimed at the conversion of the Armenian orphans to ideal followers of Islam.

It is reasonable to conclude from all these activities that Cemal's ultimate aim regarding the Armenian deportees was to integrate them into Syrian society, dispersing them in various districts as "harmless minorities." In this way, they would become ideal citizens of the Ottoman state and would not endanger the formation of a unitary and fully authorized governmental apparatus in the Ottoman realm. During both the deportations and settlements, he actively interfered with the process and improved the conditions of the Armenians. In this process, he came into conflict with Talat Pasha, who adopted a policy of deliberate ignorance toward the Armenian refugees. Cemal opened new orphanages for the Armenian children and encouraged them to "convert" to Islam to protect them from the wrath of the "anti-Armenian" factions within the CUP.

Notes

- 1 The telegrams between DH.ŞFR 450 and 600 of BOA include the dispatches from the governorates in the countryside. I saw no reference to these documents in the available studies.
- 2 For some examples, see: Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide. Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*, Providence and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1995; Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Comparative Aspects of the Armenian and Jewish Cases of Genocide: A Sociohistorical Perspective," in Alan S. Rosenbaum (ed.), *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1996. See also Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act. The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*, Paul Bessemer (trans.), New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006.
- 3 Hilmar Kaiser, "Regional Resistance to Central Government Policies: Ahmed Djemal Pasha, the Governors of Aleppo and Armenian Deportees in the Spring and Summer of 1915," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 12, Nos. 3-4, September–December 2010, p. 174.
- 4 Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, pp. 324–326.
- 5 Kaiser, "Regional Resistance," p. 174.
- 6 Kaiser, *ibid.*, p. 208.
- 7 Kaiser, *ibid.*, p. 175.
- 8 Kévorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, pp. 683–686.
- 9 Bloxham, *The Great Game*, pp. 139–143.
- 10 Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, pp. 326–327. The German consul in Damascus also made the same argument in his reports even if he was suspicious about its chance of success; PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Loytvet to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 7 April 1916.
- 11 See: BOA, DH.ŞFR 486/118, Cemal to Talat, 30 Ağustos 1331 (12 September 1915); Cemal to Enver, 27 September 1917, in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698.
- 12 Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, pp. 324–328.
- 13 For an extensive analysis of Dündar's book, see also: Ayhan Aktar and Abdülhamit Kırmızı, "Bon pour l'Orient: Fuat Dündar'ın kitabını deşifre ederken ...," in *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, Vol. 8, 2009, pp. 157–187.
- 14 For some examples, see: Artuç, *Cemal Paşa*, pp. 292–298; Hikmet Özdemir, *Cemal Paşa ve Ermeni Göçmenler: 4. Ordunun İnsani Yardım Faaliyetleri*, İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2009; Ahmet Tetik, "4. Ordu Bölgesi'nde Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele ve İnsani Yardım Çalışmaları," *Ermeni Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. 30, 2008, www.eraren.org/index.php?Lisan=tr&Page=Dergilcerik&IcerikNo=573.
- 15 The liveliest description of this differentiation was made by Falih Rıfkı in *Zeytin Dağı*, while he narrated a meeting between Halide Edib and Bahaeddin Şakir in the train:

In a station up from Adana, the late Bahaeddin Şakir came to our compartment. I introduced him to Halide Hanım ... After a long discussion Baha Şakir got off the train [to go to his destination]. Halide Hanım stopped me and said:

"You've made me shake a slaughterer's hand unwittingly."

Baha Şakir, whom I bid goodbye down [the train], whispered in my ears [that]:

"The valuable young men, who would be trained like you, must be prohibited from communicating with this woman."

Atay, *ibid.*, p. 78.

- ¹⁶ For details, see: Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, pp. 241–277.
- ¹⁷ Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 277.
- ¹⁸ According to the remarks of a German official in Istanbul, Cemal was among those who was ashamed by what had happened to the Armenians: **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 40, Wolff-Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 9 December 1915, in Serdar Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı ve Ermeniler*, CD Supplement, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012, p. 774.
- ¹⁹ Grigoris Balakian, *Armenian Golgotha: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide, 1915–1918*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009, p. 51.
- ²⁰ Djemal Pasha, *Memoirs*, p. 277.
- ²¹ In February 1916, on the Adana–Aleppo line the transfer of the Armenian refugees had to be interrupted due to the intensity of the military consignment: Talat to Enver, 3 Şubat 1331 (16 February 1916), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VIII, 1914–1918*, p. 554.
- ²² He advised Enver to increase the number of trains allocated to the Armenian refugees to complete the transport of the deportees as soon as possible. For details, see: Cemal to Enver, Aleppo, 27 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (9 November 1915), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VIII*, p. 475.
- ²³ Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, pp. 279–280.
- ²⁴ The governor of Aleppo to Talat, Damascus, 16 Nisan 1332 (29 April 1916), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VIII*, p. 558.
- ²⁵ Cemal to the Governor of Marash, Damascus, 31 Mart 1332 (13 April 1916), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VIII*, p. 557.
- ²⁶ **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 40, Wolff-Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 7 December 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 772.
- ²⁷ **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 541/120, Cemal to Talat, 21 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (4 November 1916); for similar evaluations by Cemal, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 528/38, Cemal to Talat, Aleppo, 28 Temmuz 1332 (10 August 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 553/115, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 9 Mayıs 1333 (9 May 1917).
- ²⁸ “Every Armenian is our citizen as separate persons”: Cemal to Enver, 27 September 1917, in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698.
- ²⁹ Dündar, *Modern Türkiye’nin Şifresi*, p. 257.
- ³⁰ Bloxham, *The Great Game*, pp. 139–143; Kévorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, pp. 683–686.
- ³¹ For these documents, see: **TNA**, FO 371/2492, Grey to Cabinet (transmitting Russian Embassy in London), London, 29 December 1915. For the British refusal of the proposal, see: **TNA**, FO 371/2492, Grey to Buchanan, London, 29 December 1915. For the refusal of the French government of the proposal of Cemal’s rebellion, see: **TNA**, FO 371/2492, Buchanan to Grey, Petrograd, 31 December 1915. For some other documents for the same discussion, see: **TNA**, FO 371/2767, Grey to Buchanan, London, 30 December 1915; **TNA**, FO 371/2767, FO to Buchanan, Petrograd, 31 December 1915; **TNA**, FO 371/2767, Buchanan to Grey, Petrograd, 2 January 1916; **TNA**, FO 371/2767, FO to Cambon, London, undated; **TNA**, FO 371/2767, Hirtzel to FO, 17 January 1916.
- ³² For the remarks of Von Kress in this direction, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 27 November 1915; for the opinion of the German embassy in the same way, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 21 January 1916.
- ³³ **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 2 January 1916; in the same telegram, the consul states that he agrees with Cemal.
- ³⁴ Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 285.
- ³⁵ The chapter in which he described his public works in Syria and his remarks on the Druze were not included in the English version.

- 36 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 38, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 7 August 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 536.
- 37 **TNA**, FO 371/2781, Sykes to WO, 25 September 1916.
- 38 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 37, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 17 July 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 536.
- 39 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 38, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 31 July 1915, in Dinçer, *ibid.* [CD], p. 554.
- 40 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 38, Ernst Piper [a German engineer] to Rössler, Aleppo, 18 July 1915, in Dinçer, *ibid.* [CD], p. 597.
- 41 Yervant Odian, *Accursed Years: My Exile and Return from Der Zor, 1914–1919*, London: Gomidas Institute, 2009, p. 99.
- 42 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 488/5, Bekir Sami to Talat, Aleppo, 28 Ağustos 1331 (9 September 1915).
- 43 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 488/5, Bekir Sami to Talat, Aleppo, 28 Ağustos 1331 (9 September 1915).
- 44 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 47, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 16 March 1917, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 1,012.
- 45 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 477/104, Cemal to Talat, 15 Ağustos 1331 (28 August 1915).
- 46 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 38, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 27 July 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 536.
- 47 In a telegram by the governor of Aleppo, these lands were mentioned as agriculturally productive areas. For details, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 521/106, Mustafa to Ministry of Interior, 21 Mayıs 1332 (3 June 1916).
- 48 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 477/104, Cemal to Talat, 15 Ağustos 1331 (28 August 1915).
- 49 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 41, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 9 February 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 837.
- 50 For a better conception of the fatal meaning of being sent to Der Zor for the Armenians, see: Odian, *Accursed Years*, p. 99.
- 51 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 521/106, Mustafa to Ministry of Interior, 21 Mayıs 1332 (3 June 1916).
- 52 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 477/104, Cemal to Talat, 15 Ağustos 1331 (28 August 1915).
- 53 Only the information in this paragraph was taken from Şükrü Bey's telegram: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 498/107, Şükrü to Talat, 12 Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (25 November 1915).
- 54 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 498/88, Hakkı to Talat, Adana, 11 Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (24 November 1915).
- 55 Only this information in this paragraph was taken from Şükrü Bey's telegram: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 498/107, Şükrü to Talat, 12 Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (25 November 1915).
- 56 Odian, *Accursed Years*, p. 97.
- 57 For the opinions of Von Kress on the danger of epidemic diseases brought by the deportees, see: **BA-MA**, RM 40/678, Aleppo Consul to Etappen-Kommando in Constantinople, 28 October 1915; in the existing literature, there can be found some studies on Cemal Pasha's struggle with the epidemic diseases faced by the Armenians. However, these writers do not emphasize this aspect of Cemal's actions. For some examples, see: Özdemir, "Cemal Paşa ve Ermeni Göçmenler," pp. 175–184; Tetik, "Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele."
- 58 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3253, Ds. 2, Fih. 7; Ds. 5A, Fih. 1–6, Cemal to Aleppo Commissariat, 20 Ağustos 1331 (2 September 1915) in Tetik, "Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele."
- 59 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3253, Ds. 2, Fih. 7A, the Commissariat of Aleppo to Cemal, 19 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (1 November 1915).
- 60 Dadrian, 19 October 1915, *To the Desert*, pp. 86–87.
- 61 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 57/71, Talat to the Governor of Syria, 4 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 [17 Ekim 1915], see also: *Arşiv Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, BOA Yayınları, p. 105.

- ⁶² For the details of the measures applied in the cities to protect the Armenians from epidemics, see: Tetik, "Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele."
- ⁶³ Dadrian, 7 November 1915, *To the Desert*, p. 112.
- ⁶⁴ HHStA, PA 12/463, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 November 1916.
- ⁶⁵ Balakian, *Armenian Golgotha*, pp. 103–105.
- ⁶⁶ BOA, DH.ŞFR 488/48, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 27 Ağustos 1331 (9 September 1915).
- ⁶⁷ BOA, DH.ŞFR 488/48, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 13 Eylül 1331 (26 September 1915); the German consul in Damascus advised the German Foreign Ministry to use the execution of Ahmed as a propaganda means for the Armenian events in the press: PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 40, Loytwed-Hardegg to the ambassador in Istanbul, Damascus, 17 November 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 743.
- ⁶⁸ BOA, DH.ŞFR 488/48, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 4 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (17 October 1915).
- ⁶⁹ Erden, *Ibid.* p. 227. Balakian confuses this Halil with Enver Pasha's uncle Halil Pasha and claims that those gang leaders were rewarded and sent to the Caucasus in the hope of exterminating the Caucasian Armenians. See: Balakian, *Armenian Golgotha*, p. 106.
- ⁷⁰ Atay, *Zeytindağı*, p. 81.
- ⁷¹ PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 40, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, 7 December 1915, Constantinople, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 772.
- ⁷² PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 41, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 3 January 1916, in Dinçer, *ibid.* [CD], p. 807.
- ⁷³ BOA, DH.ŞFR 486/118, Cemal to Talat, 30 Ağustos 1331 (12 September 1915); the same remarks are repeated in a document announced publicly by Cemal: Cemal to Enver, 27 September 1917, in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698. In the same way, Oppenheim reports that Cemal and his officers again and again explained to him that to remove the Armenian danger they must be transformed into harmless minorities by distributing them in various places. For details, see: PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 38, Oppenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 29 August 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 617.
- ⁷⁴ HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 August 1915.
- ⁷⁵ PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 38, Oppenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 29 August 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 618.
- ⁷⁶ HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 August 1915.
- ⁷⁷ HHStA, PA 12/463, Pallavicini to Burian (transmitting consul Beirut), Constantinople, 2 November 1915.
- ⁷⁸ HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 24 September 1915.
- ⁷⁹ BOA, DH.ŞFR 486/118, Azmi (the governor of Syria) to Talat, 5 Kanun-ı Sani 1332 (18 January 1916).
- ⁸⁰ HHStA, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 24 September 1915.
- ⁸¹ BOA, DH.ŞFR 486/118, Cemal to Talat, 30 Ağustos 1331 (12 September 1915).
- ⁸² Dadrian, 15 May 1916, *To the Desert*, p. 148. Hasan Amca also states in his memoirs that some women appealed to him to help them migrate to Damascus to be with their husbands who had fled there to work: Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü: Çerkes Hasan Bey Hatıratı," *Alemdar*, 23 Haziran 1335 (23 June 1919).
- ⁸³ NA, RG59/867.48/199, Morgenthau to Secretary of State, Constantinople, 29 November 1915 in Ara Sarafian, *United States Official Records on the Armenian Genocide 1915–1917*, Princeton and London: Gomidas Institute, 2004, p. 388.
- ⁸⁴ BOA, DH.ŞFR 492/41, Bekir Sami to Talat, Aleppo, 22 Eylül 1331 (5 October 1915).
- ⁸⁵ Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, pp. 306–312.

- 86 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 493/62, Cemal to Talat, 30 Eylül 1331 (13 October 1915); Ali Münif also warned Talat that 90 percent of the workers on the railroad in the commissariats between Pozanti and Aleppo were Armenians and that this was a great danger militarily: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 488/80, Ali Münif to Talat, 28 Ağustos 1331 (10 September 1915); the considerations of the governor of Adana were similar: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 503/11, Hakkı to Talat, 15 Kanun-ı Evvel 1331 (28 December 1915).
- 87 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 497/19, Şükrü to Talat, 29 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (11 November 1915).
- 88 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 501/42, Mustafa to Talat, 30 Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (13 December 1915).
- 89 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 493/119, Cemal to Talat, 4 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (17 October 1915).
- 90 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 40, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 18 Aralık 1915.
- 91 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 497/19, Şükrü to Talat, Aleppo, 29 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (11 November 1915).
- 92 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 497/45, Hakkı to Talat, Damascus, 31 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (13 November 1915).
- 93 **HHStA**, PA 12/463, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 7 November 1915.
- 94 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 491/112, Hulusi to Talat, Damascus, 19 Eylül 1331 (2 October 1915).
- 95 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 497/45, Hakkı to Talat, Damascus, 31 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (13 November 1915); the agent reports in the British National Archives regarding the situation of the deportees in Damascus seem exaggerated and far from reality. At a very late date, on 15 April an agent sent the following report to McMahon:

Agent was at Damascus on April 15th and was stopping in an hotel close to the barracks. Hearing a noise of a big crowd in the Meydan he went out to see what was going on. 300 or 400 naked Armenians girls and women. They were put up for auction and the whole lot disposed of, some for 2, 3 and 4 francs. Only Mohammedans were allowed to buy. The salesmen kept on exclaiming "Rejoice, oh ye faithful in the shame of the Christians". No Armenian men were brought to Damascus, only women.

TNA, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting a spy returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916.

- 96 Dadrian, 6 November 1915, *To the Desert*, p.111.
- 97 Odian, *Accursed Years*, p. 106.
- 98 **HHStA**, PA 12/463, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 15 February 1916.
- 99 **NA**, RG59/867, 4016/373, Jackson to the Secretary of State, "The Armenian Atrocities," Washington, 4 March 1918, in Sarafian, *United States Official Records*, p. 592; the German consul gave the number of workers in these factories as 4,000 women: **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 45, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 5 November 1916; on 5 April 1917, another German report calculated this number at 10,000: **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 47, Waldburg to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 5 April 1917.
- 100 **PA-AA**, Türkei 183, Bd. 38, Nurse Laura Möhring to AA, Aleppo, 12 July 1915, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 592; **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 15 March 1918. Some remarks on the recruitment of the Armenians in the labor battalions can be found in the telegram of the governor of Adana: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 594/31, Nazım to Ministry of Interior, Adana, 2 Eylül 1918 (2 September 1918).
- 101 Dadrian, 9 April 1916, *To the Desert*, p. 144.

- 102 BOA, DH.ŞFR 594/75, Rifat to Ministry of Interior, Damascus, 5 Eylül 1334 (5 September 1918).
- 103 HHStA, PA 38/371, Frenz? to Burian, 29 September 1918.
- 104 HHStA, PA 38/371, Frenz? to Burian, Aleppo, 19 September 1918.
- 105 HHStA, PA 38/371, Frenz? to Burian, Aleppo, 26 September 1918.
- 106 For a recent study on conversion and apostasy in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, see: Selim Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Ottoman Empire*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- 107 PA-AA, Türkei 183, Bd. 44, Hoffmann to the Ambassador in Istanbul, Aleppo, 29 August 1916, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 932.
- 108 HHStA, PA 12/463, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 4 August 1916.
- 109 Akçam, *Ermeni Meselesi Hallolunmuştur*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008, p. 295–300; Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, pp. 300–305. Although he explains the sadness of the local authorities in Hama because of the conversion incidents, relying on the accounts of the deportees, Kévorkian does not evaluate the conversion policies as a means applied in the whole of Syria to protect Armenians from the destructive activities of Talat's party. For details, see: Kévorkian, p. 677.
- 110 BOA, DH.ŞFR 527/19, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 20 Temmuz 1332 (2 August 1916).
- 111 TTK Arşivi, KO Koleksiyonu 10/15, Cemal to Enver, 5 Mayıs 1332 (18 May 1916).
- 112 Halide Edib, *Memoirs of Halide Edib*, London: Gorgias Press, 2005, pp. 428–429.
- 113 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, pp. 103–104.
- 114 Dadrian, 21 August 1916, *To the Desert*, pp. 164–165.
- 115 Dadrian, 8 October 1917, *ibid.*, p. 213.
- 116 Dadrian, 4 September 1916, *ibid.*, pp. 165–166.
- 117 Odian, *Accursed Years*, p. 113.
- 118 HHStA, PA 12/463, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 4 August 1916.
- 119 HHStA, PA 12/463, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 November 1916.
- 120 PA-AA, Türkei 183, Bd. 43, Loytved Hardegg to the ambassador in Constantinople, Damascus, 30 May 1916, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 902.
- 121 PA-AA, Türkei 183, Bd. 57, Göppert to AA (transmitted from Aleppo as wireless intelligence), Berlin, 21 July 1919.
- 122 Hüseyin Kazım was a former Unionist. The Unionist newspaper *Tunin* had been established with his financial and intellectual support. He was among the founders of the Istanbul branch of the CUP. Afterwards, he was opposed to the radicalizing attitude of the CUP and migrated to Beirut. For his memoirs, see: Hüseyin Kazım Kadri, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete Hatıralarım*, İsmail Kara (ed.), İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 2000.
- 123 PA-AA, Türkei 183, Bd. 43, Loytved Hardegg to the ambassador in Constantinople, Damascus, 30 May 1916, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 902.
- 124 Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü: Çerkes Hasan Beyin Hatıratı," *Alemdar*, 20 Haziran 1335 (20 June 1919).
- 125 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 7 April 1916.
- 126 PA-AA, Türkei 183, Bd. 43, Loytved Hardegg to the ambassador in Constantinople, Damascus, 30 May 1916, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 902.
- 127 PA-AA, Türkei 183, Bd. 43, Loytved Hardegg to the ambassador in Constantinople, Damascus, 30 May 1916, in Dinçer, *ibid.* [CD], p. 902. In his book, Özdemir thoroughly evaluated Cemal's organization of the relief efforts. However,

- he never speaks about the conflict between Cemal and Talat, and, interestingly enough, attributes the resistance of the bureaucrats in Syria to Hüseyin Kazım's measures to being on bad terms with Cemal Pasha. Özdemir also uses the memoirs of Hasan Bey, which will be addressed below. In the same way, he ignores the similar evaluations of Hasan Bey regarding the attitudes of some officials in Syria. He insistently disregards the contrast between Talat and Cemal on the Armenian question and tries to portray the Ottoman government as united on this issue. For the details of Özdemir's assessments, see: Özdemir, *Cemal Paşa*, pp. 100–115.
- 128 Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü: Çerkes Hasan Bey'in Hatıratı," *Alemdar*, 19 Haziran 1335 (19 June 1919).
 - 129 For the memoirs of his doctor with Hasan Bey, see: Müfid Ekdal, *Eski Bir İhtilalciden Dinlediklerim*, İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2003.
 - 130 Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü," 19 Haziran 1335 [19 June 1919].
 - 131 Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü: Çerkes Hasan Bey'in Hatıratı," *Alemdar*, 20 Haziran 1335 (20 June 1919).
 - 132 BOA, DH.ŞFR 532/37, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 2 Eylül 1332 (15 September 1916).
 - 133 Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü," 20 Haziran 1335 (20 June 1919).
 - 134 Çerkes Hasan Bey, *ibid.*
 - 135 Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü: Çerkes Hasan Bey'in Hatıratı," *Alemdar*, 25 Haziran 1335 (25 June 1919).
 - 136 Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü: Çerkes Hasan Bey'in Hatıratı," *Alemdar*, 26 Haziran 1335 (26 June 1919).
 - 137 Çerkes Hasan Bey, "Tehcirin İç Yüzü: Çerkes Hasan Bey'in Hatıratı," *Alemdar*, 28 Haziran 1335 (28 June 1919).
 - 138 HHStA, PA 12/463, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 November 1916.
 - 139 Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, p. 204.
 - 140 TTK Arşivi, KO Koleksiyonu 10/21, Cemal to Enver, 23 Mayıs 1332 (5 June 1916); Enver to Cemal, 23 Mayıs 1332 (5 June 1916).
 - 141 BOA, DH.ŞFR 63/137, Talat to the governorates, 17 Nisan 1332 (30 April 1916), see also: *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler*, p. 139.
 - 142 NA, RG59/867, 4016/373, Jackson to the Secretary of State, 4 March 1918, in Sarafian, *United States Official Records*, p. 594.
 - 143 NA, RG59/867, 4016/260, Rohner to Morgenthau, Aleppo, 26 November 1915, in Sarafian, *ibid.*, p. 435.
 - 144 PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 42, Paula Schaefer to Rössler, Aleppo, 1 March 1916, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 862.
 - 145 For Rohner's report on one of his travels, see: PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 43, Rohner to Rössler, Aleppo, 26 June 1916, in Dinçer, *ibid.* [CD], pp. 907–908.
 - 146 PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 43, Rohner to Rössler, Aleppo, 26 June 1916, in Dinçer, *ibid.* [CD], pp. 907–908.
 - 147 NA, RG59/867, 4016/373, Jackson to the Secretary of State, 4 March 1918, in Sarafian, *United States Official Records*, p. 594; for a money request of Rohner from the American officials, see: NA, LC/HM (Sr.)/Reel 8/005, Beatrice Rohner to Peet, Aleppo, 2 January 1916, in Sarafian, *ibid.*, p. 433.
 - 148 NA, LC/HM (Sr.)/Reel 8/005, Beatrice Rohner to Peet, Aleppo, 2 January 1916, in Sarafian, *ibid.*, p. 433.
 - 149 PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 47, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 16 March 1917, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], p. 1,012.
 - 150 PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 43, Meternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 10 July 1916, in Dinçer, *ibid.*, p. 912.
 - 151 PA-AA, Türkiye 183, Bd. 44, Hoffmann to Constantinople Embassy, Aleppo, 29 August 1916, in Dinçer, *ibid.*, p. 931.

- ¹⁵² **PA-AA**, Türkiye 183, Bd. 47, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 16 March 1917, in Dinçer, *ibid.*, pp. 1,012–1,013.
- ¹⁵³ **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 503/91, Mustafa to Talat, Aleppo, 4 Kanun-ı Evvel 1331 (17 December 1915).
- ¹⁵⁴ **PA-AA**, Türkiye 183, Bd. 47, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 16 March 1917, in Dinçer, *Türk-Alman Silah Arkadaşlığı* [CD], pp. 1,012–1,013.
- ¹⁵⁵ **PA-AA**, Türkiye 183, Bd. 42, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting consul Damascus), Constantinople, 29 March 1916, in Dinçer, *ibid.*, p. 882.
- ¹⁵⁶ **PA-AA**, Türkiye 183, Bd. 42, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 29 March 1916, in Dinçer, *ibid.*, p. 882.
- ¹⁵⁷ **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 10/21, Cemal to Enver, 23 Mayıs 1332 (5 June 1916).
- ¹⁵⁸ Cemal to Enver, 27 Eylül 1333 (27 September 1917), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698.
- ¹⁵⁹ Cemal to Enver, 27 Eylül 1333 (27 September 1917), in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698.
- ¹⁶⁰ Dadrian, 4 September 1916, *To the Desert*, p. 165.

4 Struggling against foreign influence for “full independence”

I saw indications that the Turkish authorities were maturing plans to put all foreigners and foreign institutions under the iron heel of the despotic regime which the present Ottoman Government is striving to impose upon this unhappy country in order to thoroughly Turkishize [*sic*] it.¹

As part of Cemal's policy to reinforce the Ottoman state's authority over Syria, the struggle against the influence of foreign powers created one of the most crucial aspects of his policy in Syria. As noted above, considerable cultural investments by the Great Powers there, especially those of France, had made the Ottoman government appear weak in the eyes of its subjects in Syria throughout the entire nineteenth century. During this century, the Ottomans had to compete with these powers for the allegiance of its Syrian citizens, because of their influence stemming from cultural and educational investments and privileges provided by the capitulations. Therefore, in addition to the struggle against internal “threats” to Ottoman supremacy in Syria narrated in the previous chapters, Cemal also endeavored to put an end to the Ottoman–European competition for Syrian loyalty, replacing sympathy for European states with “loyalty to Ottomanness,” which would transform the Syrians into citizens like those in modern nation-states.

The relations between the Ottomans and the Great Powers constitute a multidimensional issue with a long history. Beginning from the end of the eighteenth century, the Great Powers enjoyed significant influence in the Ottoman realm in general, and in Syria in particular. This influence had political, economic, and cultural aspects, created with the privileges provided by the capitulations.² The dissemination of foreign influence with the long experience of the capitulations throughout the nineteenth century created a negative attitude in the minds of the Ottoman statesmen against the Great Powers, which, in their view, prevented the integration, independence, and development of the imperial realm, as well as the Ottoman government's coordination and control of its citizens' conduct. Thus, the “governmentalization” of the Ottoman realm in the Foucauldian sense was prevented by this Western influence. Resentment against the political interventions of

these powers had so increased that, at the beginning of World War I, even the German soldiers under the service of the Ottoman army were seen as occupation forces by the people and the officials.³

The Great Powers had cultural, political, and economic influence in Syria. In terms of cultural penetration, as a consequence of its significant investments in this area, France achieved the lion's share in the Syrian realm, although it was weakened by the increasing impact of Germany and its *Weltpolitik*, as well as by the competition of the Greek-Orthodox community, acting with the support of Russia.⁴ Toward the end of the nineteenth century, there was intense competition between Germany, Russia, and France in Syria, with each power attempting to seize areas of influence. Economically, France was again in the lead, taking advantage of its operating rights for many of the railroads and ports in Syria. As for politics, because of its influence over the various sects of Syrian Christendom, France prevailed against the other powers in spite of its failure to gain the sympathy of Muslims. Although the British had some influence over the Muslim population, this was mainly due to the Muslims' inclination toward British tolerance in case they were forced to choose between France and Great Britain. Therefore, as will be analyzed in detail below, the greatest struggle during Cemal Pasha's time as governor was against French penetration, though Russia's impact on some Christian sects and Britain's popularity among the Muslims also gave these powers a voice in Syria.⁵

As mentioned, for years this situation prevented the Ottoman Empire from exercising full authority over its lands and compelled it to compete with the Great Powers.⁶ However, the outbreak of war with the Entente states gave the Ottoman government a golden opportunity to assert their authority in the region.⁷ Immediately after the declaration of war, all properties belonging to British and French institutions were seized on behalf of the army. Furthermore, the vacant houses of British and French citizens were requisitioned for army use on account of the exodus of their inhabitants.⁸ On the one hand, as the governor general of Syria, Cemal Pasha did his best in his area of administration to replace foreign influence with that of the Ottoman state, both politically and culturally.⁹ On the other hand, he also struggled against the efforts of the Ottoman Empire's allies to replace the Entente's influence with their own. This chapter examines how Cemal Pasha struggled against all kinds of foreign penetration in the Syrian provinces during his governorate,¹⁰ giving priority to the German and French cases.

Countering French influence

As briefly stated before, in the run-up to World War I, although it was unsuccessful in gaining the sympathy of the majority of Syrians, among the other Great Powers France enjoyed the greatest influence in Syria economically, culturally, and politically. The spread of French culture and language had been tolerated, and even sometimes promoted by the Ottoman

government until the beginning of the war, since it was perceived as a component of modernization. In every government high school there was at least one French lecturer teaching the language of Ottoman modernization. However, the outbreak of the war provoked an extensive struggle against French influence. In this regard, Cemal Pasha conducted one of the most influential battles, if not the most influential, against the French presence in the Syrian realm.¹¹

The Ottoman government initiated its struggle in the economic realm. At the beginning of the war, to eliminate the economic presence of France, all the railroads and ports in Syria which had been administered and operated by the French state were confiscated and their operating rights were handed over to the Hijaz Railroad Company, the national company of the Ottoman Empire. In this regard, the Damascus, Hama, Jaffa, and Jerusalem Chemin-de-fer Companies and the port administrations of Beirut were Ottomanized and given to the Hijaz Railroad Company.¹² As will be explained below, when Cemal Pasha decided to detain citizens of the Entente states in Syria as hostages, the directors and officials of the former French railroad and port firms were not excluded from this policy: they were paid a prisoner salary from the funds of the army.¹³ It was relatively easy for the Ottoman government to abolish the French economic presence with this method of nationalization. However, erasing France's cultural influence would not be so easy.

Deportation and exile of the agents of French influence from Syria

As the first part of the Ottoman policy of eliminating French influence, the citizens and religious figures of the state, who made the French visible in the Syrian provinces with their religious, cultural, and educational activities, were to be deported together with the citizens of the other Entente states. Most of the deportees were priests and nuns, who could influence the public opinion of Syrian Christians and who had for years been the transmitters of French cultural influence in these provinces.¹⁴

When it was decided that French nationals would be expelled from Syria, some citizens of the Entente states were exempted, especially those who could be beneficial for the army in circumstances of war. The nuns of the French hospital in Damascus continued their services for a while upon the request of the commander of the 4th Army, whereas the priests of the hospital were deported.¹⁵ In May 1916, these nuns were removed from the hospital and compelled to leave their uniforms behind and adopt the local women's attire. The hospital was occupied by the Ottoman government.¹⁶ Some priests in confiscated cloisters and orphanages were allowed to stay by taking Ottoman citizenship.¹⁷

When the deportation order was first issued, all the citizens of the Entente were contained within its scope. However, after the deportation process was underway, following the death of civilians in the bombardment of the Syrian coastline by Entente warships, the deportation was halted on 12 December by

the governor in compliance with the army commander in order to keep the foreign citizens as hostages to threaten the Entente states and prevent another such incident. First Zeki Pasha,¹⁸ Cemal's predecessor, and later Cemal Pasha threatened the Entente states via the Italian and American diplomats, as well as through proclamations in newspapers warning that the citizens of the Entente had been detained as hostages in Damascus and Jerusalem and would be killed in groups of three for each Ottoman killed in the allied bombardment.¹⁹ In addition, the material damages would be compensated for with the income of French and the British institutions in Ottoman territories.²⁰ On 19 December the detainees were allowed to leave the country until 28 December; one day later, upon the British bombardment of Alexandretta, Cemal canceled the permission. On 26 December, some Entente citizens who were deemed eligible to be deported – most of them French clergy – were driven out of the country through 2 January.²¹ Meanwhile, Talat warned Cemal that killing three people in return for each Ottoman citizen, above all the clergy, would amount to a proclamation of war against the whole Christian world. Cemal answered that his threat was only a bluff to prevent further bombardment of the Syrian coast.²²

Although Cemal blocked the deportation of the ordinary citizens of the Entente states, he did not suspend the process for the clergy, since their deportation and exile would also represent the abolition of French cultural investment in Syria and the elimination of these clerics' influence over the local population.²³ Within two days of Cemal's deportation declaration, 53 priests and nuns left Beirut on an Italian vessel. Similarly, two days later, 212 French, 44 Russian, and 4 Belgian priests and 90 French nuns were deported.²⁴ According to information given to the French representative in Alexandria by the deportees from Jerusalem, they were first interned in the barracks and then deported on the order of Cemal Pasha. Most probably, this was done to prevent the leaking of information. On the other hand, the ordinary British and French citizens were kept in hotels and barracks as hostages.²⁵ However, the military authorities encouraged nuns and some physicians from the Entente states to stay in the hospitals instead of returning to their homes.²⁶ In response to Cemal Pasha's policy, France considered a military operation against Syria, but they had to abandon this plan due to British opposition.²⁷

All the other clerics who were not allowed to leave the country were exiled to Damascus and Urfa.²⁸ In addition, because the detainment of Entente state citizens in Syria, especially in the coastal regions, could open the way to espionage, Cemal exiled them to the interior. A German diplomat in Damascus reported on the difficulty of keeping the Entente citizens isolated and warned that they were currently able to interact freely with Syrians. The Austrian consul in Damascus, similarly, agreed that the citizens of the Entente states – most of whom were of French nationality – played a considerable role in the dissemination of pro-Entente leaflets among the people, which sometimes created panic among the local population.²⁹ As a result of

all these factors, Cemal expelled all the French, British, and Russian citizens living in the Syrian provinces to Asia Minor, moving those who had settled in the coastal towns first, unless their health conditions were unsuitable for travel.³⁰ Regarding the place of resettlement for these exiles, a German military official reported that, according to Enver Pasha, in the beginning Cemal was contemplating resettling them in the desert. However, because of the difficulties they would have had adapting to the weather of the desert, he abandoned this idea.³¹

With similar considerations, Cemal Pasha followed the same policy toward the Muslim citizens of the Entente states (of Algerian and Indian origin). He claimed that they were paid salaries by the French and the British governments via the American consulate and that their presence in Damascus, therefore, was both militarily and politically dangerous. As a result, 49 Algerians and 13 Indians, all of them Muslims, were banished to inner Anatolia with their families on Cemal's order.³² After this, any distribution of money to former citizens of Entente states – most of whom were the Jewish immigrants who subsisted on foreign aid – via American consulates had to be approved by the governor of the relevant city.³³

In addition to French citizens, the Algerian Ottomans who had immigrated to Syria after the French occupation of Algeria were under significant French influence and Cemal monitored their activities throughout the war. A considerable number of people of Algerian origin were banished to Anatolia during the war period within the framework of the policy adopted for the abolishment of French influence in the Syrian provinces.³⁴ As analyzed in Chapter 1, some prominent Algerian leaders from the al-Jazairi family were either sentenced to death or exiled to Anatolia for the same reason.

Cemal Pasha also commenced a process of expulsion for those who were thought to have become agents of French influence in Syria before the war, consisting mostly of the prominent Christian families of Beirut and Lebanon. In Cemal's view, these people were dangerous both militarily, as a source of intelligence, and politically, as a tool of French penetration. As a result, Cemal began a process of banishing certain prominent Christian families of Beirut to Asia Minor who had developed a reputation for Francophile sentiments. In the first quarter of 1916, according to Germany's consul in Beirut, he expelled a group of people, primarily Christian merchants, along with their families. Their number reached 70 men. They were expelled on the basis of testimony from government informants without any trial.³⁵

A number of prominent Lebanese were arrested and expelled to Anatolia on accusations of disloyalty to the state. These included the former vice-president of the Administrative Board of the autonomous Lebanese regime, Habib Pasha Saad;³⁶ the former president of the Administrative Board, and the most influential supporter of French penetration in Lebanon, the former *kaymakam* of the Metn district, Faik (Faiz?) Shehab;³⁷ the *kaymakam* of Shuf district, Amin Tawfiq Arslan; and his brother Amin Fuad Arslan; Said Bey al-Bostani, the former commander of the autonomous Lebanese troops and

the brother of the former Minister of Agriculture, Suleiman al-Bostani;³⁸ and other Lebanese notables.³⁹ Approximately one month before this decision, Amin Arslan and Habib Pasha Saad had been nominated as deputy candidates for Lebanon by Ali Münif.⁴⁰ But later they were abandoned and exiled.⁴¹ As explained in Chapter 2, the Maronite patriarch had also been banished to Adana for the same reasons. All of them were exiled without any trial, like previous exiles. According to the German consul in Beirut, some of them were banished because they were the supporters of the French and British, but others were simply victims of the personal ambitions and animosity of government informants.⁴²

Cemal was rather strict on the issue of the return of these exiles to their homes. As in his treatment of the Muslim exiles to Anatolia, he never allowed them to return to Syria. Even the request of the American ambassador and the mediation of Talat Pasha for the return of some people were refused by the absolute ruler of Syria. The German consul stated that these actions by the government sharpened the divisions between the Turkish rulers and the Arabs, and caused some eyebrows to be raised even among the pro-Ottoman segments of Syrian society.⁴³ However, when Cemal's long-term policies were taken into consideration, it is clear that he aimed at the transformation of the social structure of Syria, rather than the appeasement of the people through moderate Ottoman policies.

The Ottomanization of French cultural institutions

The commencement of the Ottoman struggle against French institutions in Syria predates even the arrival of Cemal Pasha. This was not a policy adopted only for Syria. It was part of a strategy of nationalizing all French institutions all over the Ottoman lands.⁴⁴ After the *ex parte* abolition of the capitulations, the Ottoman authorities first began a process of pacification against means of facilitating communication between French cultural institutions and the outside world, as well as those that were protected by France through the regulations of the capitulations.⁴⁵ To this end, first the wireless telegraph machines in these institutions were removed and the post offices of foreign states, which were beyond the Ottoman government's control, were closed.⁴⁶ The post offices of the empire's allies were not exempted from this policy.⁴⁷ Special attention was paid to depriving Jesuit priests, who were corresponding intensively with the French warships patrolling the Syrian coast, of their means of communication.⁴⁸ Even ordinary travelers and passengers were searched for letters.⁴⁹ At the beginning of the war, the authorities were so strict in controlling the means of communication that, according to the American consul general, even the sending of notes and letters between individuals or friends by messenger was "forbidden under penalty of a fine of 8.80 dollar."⁵⁰ In the same vein, with the Ottoman declaration of war against the Entente states, the buildings of the French and the British consulates in Beirut, Jerusalem, Aleppo, and Damascus were subjected to searches.⁵¹ The

Ottoman police did not manage to seize any British documents; however, the French files in Beirut and Damascus were confiscated.⁵² Afterwards, these documents would be used as evidence to punish the leaders of the Arabist movement, as discussed earlier.

After the decision of the Ottoman cabinet to close all Entente institutions and convert them into Ottoman property, a process of relentless prosecution was initiated against French religious, medical, and educational institutions. In this regard, all French institutions – schools, hospitals, orphanages, etc. – were seized along with their property⁵³ and their priests and nuns were first removed from their posts and, subsequently, forced to move out of the buildings of these institutions.⁵⁴ The police carried out searches of the houses of priests in various cities, and in the French colony in Beirut. In Damascus and Jerusalem the buildings of schools run by priests and nuns and some of the churches under French protection were transformed into military barracks.⁵⁵ The rest were given permission by the cabinet to continue their educational activities as *sultani* schools or Teachers' Schools (Darülmualimin) under the control of the Ottoman government.⁵⁶ The request of the Apostolic See to take the Catholic institutions under its protection remained inconclusive.⁵⁷ The German consul in Aleppo reported six months later that the closure of the French school and the abolition of its protection over the Catholics had noticeably hampered the dissemination of French culture through education.⁵⁸

As for the Ottomanization of these French institutions, following their confiscation, the Ottoman government began to transform them into Ottoman institutions until the middle of the war period. As was explained above, some of them had been occupied by the army for military use. However, others continued to provide their services as Ottoman educational institutions. A dispatch from the Minister of Education to the Director of Education in Beirut shows the conduct of the Ottoman government regarding the Ottomanization of these institutions. The former requested the replacement of the teaching staff when these institutions were confiscated, otherwise they would change only in name.⁵⁹

In this regard, as examined in Chapter 1, some seminary rooms belonging to the St. Anna Church were transformed into a Muslim religious and law school and given the symbolic name: Selahaddin-i Eyyubi Külliyesi. Selahaddin was the sultan of the Ayyubids, who recaptured Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 1187.⁶⁰ Similarly, the Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes was occupied and transformed into an Ottoman *sultani* school.⁶¹ All its staff members were deported on the basis of their potential to manipulate local public opinion.⁶² At Jubeil, Tripoli, and Junie, after the Ottomanization of the French schools, the government recruited Turkish and Arab teachers as replacements. The crosses over the doors of these religious institutions were taken down and replaced with crescents.⁶³

A similar policy was carried out by Ali Münif Bey in Lebanon in April 1916. Since Lebanon had an autonomous government before the war, the Ottomanization of the French institutions there was slower than in the other

districts of Syria. The governor of Lebanon issued a declaration "to the monks, priests, brothers and sisters, who [were] in Ottoman Lebanon and who [were] members of foreign congregations," and ordered that those religious figures who had already acquired Ottoman citizenship cut all their ties with foreign congregations and religious orders. If these religious figures wanted to continue their monastic lives, they had to get the approval of the heads of their local communities, Maronite, Greek-Catholic, or Greek-Orthodox. With this declaration all churches, schools, and other foundations belonging to institutions under French protection in Lebanon before the war were confiscated. The German consul in Beirut emphasized that the main goal of these policies was to break the influence of the French, which had become quite powerful in Lebanon.⁶⁴

The Ottomanization of orphanages and schools received special attention, since children were of vital importance in the process of identity-building. According to the Ottoman Minister of Education, the ultimate aim was to Islamize those institutions, removing the adjective "foreign" in front of their names.⁶⁵ For this reason, in the French orphanage in Beirut, after the removal of the nuns, 151 women were needed for the maintenance of the institution's services.⁶⁶ In the same vein, the Christian children who were enrolled by their parents to be trained as priests and nuns had to be returned to their families. Similarly, in a short span of time, Christian instructors and officials would be replaced with Muslims.⁶⁷ Unlike in Beirut, in Damascus the care of Christian orphans would be entrusted to new Muslim tutors, instead of sending the children away.⁶⁸ However, the orphanage in Damascus was exempted from confiscation through the intervention of Cemal Pasha.⁶⁹

A closer look at the situation of an Ottomanized orphanage in Beirut through the testimony of a nurse, Felizitas Taux, who worked there will show the extent of the transformation. After the seizure of the French orphanages in Beirut, which consisted of a central house used as a school for the education of the orphans and other students (for 800 students), an orphan boys' house (for 145 boys), an orphan girls' house (for 275 girls), and a hospital, the governor of Beirut appointed a Turkish director for these institutions, named Kudret Bey. First, the director appointed the two German nurses who worked in the orphanages, who had worked under French protection before the war, as cashiers in different orphanages, instead of employing them in the care of the children. This was in response to the order of the central government that allowed them to stay in Syria if they did not work as teachers.⁷⁰ It is worth mentioning that Kudret Bey was dismissed from this office because of his inability to manage this institution.⁷¹

In addition, the director brought 25 Muslim orphans to the orphanages and ordered that, from then on, these children would be cared for there. He also ordered that the Muslim children should not be taken to the church, and removed all the statues of Christian sacred figures (Mother Mary, Joseph Antonius, St. Vincens, and the cross) from the hospital and the orphanages, although the German nurses threatened to resign in response.⁷²

Similarly, the chapel of the Jesuit School in Beirut was transformed into a conference hall and all the sacred property inside the building was removed.⁷³

Another question for Cemal Pasha in Syria regarding the people employed in French religious institutions was the issue of German and Austrian citizens who were in the service of those institutions or who were protected by France. For Cemal tolerating their activities would mean the continuation of foreign influence in a different form, that is, the replacement of French influence with that of the Germans or Austrians, which was the most important goal followed by these states in Syria throughout the war.⁷⁴ Thus, the German and Austrian consuls made an appeal to the governor of Syria, requesting that these institutions be allowed to continue their activities as before. Becoming aware of their aims,⁷⁵ the Ottoman government allowed their staff to stay in Syria on the condition that they would not work as teachers in the schools and monasteries.⁷⁶

At the expense of ruining the structure of these institutions and squandering their human capital, Cemal Pasha and the bureaucracy under his rule succeeded to a large extent in Ottomanizing the French institutions in Syria, through which the foreign states were able to exert great influence and intervene in the internal affairs of Syria on the pretext of the problems faced by their institutions and colonies. In this way, Cemal made a crucial step toward the full independence of the Ottoman Empire from the interventions of foreign powers in the Syrian realm, most likely taking the possibilities of the post-war period into consideration.

Checking neutral and allied influence in Syria

In addition to attempts to eliminate the influence of enemy states, the abolition of the capitulations also enabled the Ottoman government to prevent allied and neutral states from asserting their influence in the Syrian realm. This section analyzes Cemal Pasha's struggle to check neutral and allied influence and to prevent these powers' intervention in the governmental affairs of the empire in Syria.

German activities in Syria and the Turkish and Arab reaction

German attempts to gain influence in the Syrian territories predated the accession of Wilhelm II to the throne,⁷⁷ and on the eve of the war German colonization had already reached a considerable level in Syria,⁷⁸ although it was not comparable to that of France.⁷⁹ When Cemal Pasha arrived in Syria, it was widely known that Germany aimed to deepen its penetration there, taking advantage of the war.⁸⁰ In spite of its backwardness in comparison to Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire also attempted to assert its influence, taking advantage of the circumstances of war, at least among the Catholics in the province, filling the gap left by France.⁸¹

As explained above, Cemal Pasha had been appointed as the governor general of Syria to integrate these lands into the imperial body and to ensure independence from foreign intervention in these provinces. Therefore, he had to struggle against the efforts of the allies of the empire to gain an area of influence there, in addition to eliminating the influence of the enemies of the Ottomans. As will be explained below, he did not hesitate to make use of German technical and scientific experience in the development of Syria. However, as indicated by the Germans themselves, in Cemal's mind their role in this process was no more than advisory.⁸²

With the outbreak of the war, Germany had its eye on Syria as a sphere of influence and an area of colonization. To this end, first of all, the number of German officials in Syria was increased and their quality was improved. Before the war, Germany was represented in Damascus by a vice-consulate. The director of the Palaestina Bank, Mr. Karl Schiefer, acted as the consular administrator there. However, after the commencement of the war, as a consequence of the increasing importance of Syria and Arabs for Germany, Dr. Löytvet, a physician specializing in psychology and an important diplomat, was sent to Damascus with broad authority. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, in a short time he gained considerable influence with Cemal Pasha and the Ottoman officials in Syria.⁸³ In addition to Dr. Löytvet, from officers to engineers, all the German officials employed in Syria worked to increase the German influence there.⁸⁴ The Spanish consul in Jerusalem described the Germanization of Jerusalem as follows: "Jerusalem is rapidly Germanizing: The new military governor is a German general that they call Bach Pasha. In addition, the Chief of the Military Staff, the Military Censor, etc. are German."⁸⁵

First of all, Germany considered implementing a policy in Syria that would create the infrastructure for a future colony in the post-war era. Some publications issued in Germany during the war made these intentions clear, openly investigating the value of Syria and its surroundings as a colony for Germany.⁸⁶ In the same regard, throughout the war period Germany made a considerable effort to obtain the operating rights of the railroads that had been seized from France. Moreover, some German officials considered demanding these rights from France as a war indemnity at the end of the war.⁸⁷

The Germans also worked to obtain the right to administer the Hijaz Railroad on the pretext of its maladministration by the Turks. The German officials in Syria repeatedly complained about the errors in administration of the railroad company, claiming that this misrule prevented the proper organization of military affairs in Syria. After submitting this complaint, these officials claimed that if the administration of the Hijaz Railroad were placed in the hands of the Germans, the services would be improved.⁸⁸ Acquiring the Hijaz Railroad would also mean taking over the extraction rights of the mines given to this railroad company, something the Germans had planned for.⁸⁹

Furthermore, they aimed to establish agricultural colonies in various places in Syria.⁹⁰ To this end, the Germans strove to persuade Abd al-Rahman

Pasha al-Yusuf, a pro-Ottoman notable and a senator in the Ottoman Parliament, to introduce intensive methods in his large agricultural estates (100,000 ha) spread throughout various districts in Syria. Due to the negative attitude of the Ottoman government vis-à-vis foreign investments, they planned to make an Ottoman company partner in this undertaking. Thus, with the mechanization of agriculture, the orders for agricultural machines would flow into Germany. The demonstration of what German industry could do would raise demand in the region. All this information was conveyed to Berlin upon the visit of the pasha there for this purpose.⁹¹ However, the defeat of Germany in World War I made it impossible to carry out this project.

At the same time, the Germans had to compete with Austria for both mines and agricultural lands in Syria. The German officials were disturbed by the possible exploitation of the agricultural abundance of Syria by Austria, which would be paid for with German blood.⁹² A similar conflict occurred over the issue of the mines. When Austria attempted to obtain the operating rights for the mines around Heraklea, the German government did not hesitate to issue a warning to them.⁹³

Cemal knew of the Germans' aims and struggled as much as possible to block them. It is clear from a telegram sent by Şeyhülislam Hayri Efendi to Cemal Pasha that the Ottoman government had knowledge of almost every detail of Germany's intention to take hold of the operating rights of the Hijaz Railroad and the mines around the railroad. Conveying this information to Cemal, Hayri requested that he be wary of these German activities.⁹⁴ Cemal guaranteed the Şeyhülislam that he would protect the Hijaz Railroad from these German ambitions.⁹⁵ To this end, the mines in the various cities of Lebanon and coal deposits in Tripoli were annexed by the Hijaz Railroad Company.⁹⁶

Based on the reports of Austrian, American, and Ottoman officials, it is clear that Cemal was cognizant of the importance of economic independence for the full realization of Ottoman authority in Syria and that he did not allow the Germans to move beyond an advisory role throughout his governorate there. Furthermore, most of the Turkish staff and soldiers in Syria detested the Germans, understanding that Germany was planning to establish a protectorate in the Ottoman realm and Syria.⁹⁷

There was an ongoing conflict between German and Turkish soldiers in Syria throughout the war, stemming mainly from the Germans' condescending attitudes toward Turks and Arabs and Germany's colonial intentions.⁹⁸ Toward the end of the war, the frustration of the Turks employed in Syria had so increased that an anti-German placard, written in Turkish, was hung in the most central streets of Damascus. The Austrian consul suggested that, due to the language of the placard, it was the product of Turkish soldiers who detested the Germans. The contents of the placard make the reasons for their hostility to the German soldiers clear:

It must be known that we are going to save our country from the Germans, who invaded it, step-by-step. The German troops from

Istanbul to Palestine consist of three battalions. We are warning our people before this number increases further. It must be noted that in Gallipoli and Kutulamare we conducted the war alone. Look how our soldiers are fed. The German soldiers eat three times more than our soldiers.⁹⁹

As for the local people, a similar reaction against the Germans was widespread among the Syrians, both Christian and Muslim. According to a German military official, they blamed Germany for the disasters concomitant with the war, such as famine, inflation, military requisitions.¹⁰⁰ According to the German consul in Beirut, the Syrians blamed excessive German consumption for the increase in food prices.¹⁰¹ Another German official in Syria suggested that, in the minds of the Arabs, if Turkey had not entered into the war thanks to Germany, the disasters afflicting the Syrians would not have happened. Similarly, the atrocities carried out by Cemal Pasha, such as executions and exiles, were attributed to the Germans by the Christian and Muslim Syrians, who thought that the Germans were capable of stopping such incidents, as was done by the consuls before the war.¹⁰² Such considerations paved the way for an increase of the Entente's popularity among the local population¹⁰³ and brought the Muslims and the Christians closer to each other than ever before.¹⁰⁴

German attempts to create an area of influence in Syria failed to win popular support because of their inability to persuade the Turks of their goodwill or to convince the Arabs, both Muslim and Christian, of their innocence in the disastrous incidents that occurred in Syria throughout the war. In other words, they were unsuccessful in obtaining the support of both the people and the elites, although for different reasons. The popularity of French culture among both Turks and Arabs can be cited as another reason for the Germans' failure. As will be shown next, German attempts to win cultural and political influence in Syria would also, to a large extent, meet with the resistance of the local and central Ottoman authorities, who were suspicious about Germany's intentions.

Prevention of foreign interference in the affairs of government officials

Cemal Pasha stood firm concerning the political and administrative independence of Ottoman officials from foreign interference. He always sided with the full authority of the Ottoman officials in their territory. Therefore, in the new era, all non-Ottoman interventions in Ottoman administrative systems had to be prevented by the authorities in Syria as far as possible.¹⁰⁵ They also strove to minimize the visibility of the foreign presence in the cities. To that end, with the beginning of the war it was declared that "none of the general establishments or private residences are allowed to hoist any flag whatsoever" with the exception of "the consuls ... over their consulates."¹⁰⁶

Furthermore, on all occasions, Cemal stressed the abolition of the capitulations and the illegitimacy of consuls intervening in the affairs of the Ottoman government. As conveyed by Dr. Ruppin, the head of the Zionist organization in Palestine, in a meeting attended by all the consuls in Jerusalem, Cemal treated them with disdain and described their position in Syria as that of mere "distinguished foreigners."¹⁰⁷ Similarly, the Spanish consul reported that "the [Ottoman] authorities treat us consuls with such indifference and animosity that it seems like we are more of an enemy than the Allies themselves."¹⁰⁸ According to Ruppin, the consuls of Germany in Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem played no role in the resolution of conflicts between his community and the government. Furthermore, the Zionist leader described Cemal Pasha as a stealthy adversary of German influence in Syria.¹⁰⁹

The German and the Austrian diplomats agreed with Ruppin on the issue of Cemal's sensitivity to interference by foreign consuls in the governmental affairs of the empire.¹¹⁰ The Austrian consul in Aleppo reported that, after the abolition of the capitulations, all authority in the provinces had been concentrated in the hands of the governors. The natural consequence of this was a decrease in the popularity of the consuls among the people. Before the abolition of the capitulations, the consulates of the Great Powers were centers of military and political power. However, in the aftermath of the abolition of the capitulations, as a result of unsuccessful attempts by the German, Austrian, and American consuls to influence government practices, their reputation among the local population was damaged and some mocking urban legends about their lack of power emerged.¹¹¹ Similarly, their relations with Arab notables deteriorated in the post-capitulations era. In earlier years, according to the Austrian consul in Aleppo, the local notables were both intermediaries between the government and the consuls and a valuable source of information for them. But, after the abolition of the rights of the consuls, the notables who had relations with these diplomatic missions were deemed untrustworthy and prosecuted by the government.¹¹² According to the diaries of the Spanish consul, "to clinch the suppression of the Capitulations," beginning from 13 February 1917, the government would "not recognize either the functions or the name of *dragoman*, nor that of *cavas*"; they would "be called secretaries and servants respectively." The consul guessed that the Ottomans would "soon suppress the *cavas* uniform."¹¹³

Cemal did not hesitate to warn the consuls, when necessary, to mind their own business instead of meddling in the internal issues of the empire. In October 1916 he sent a message to the consuls of commerce acting in the Syrian provinces, requesting that they concern themselves with commercial issues, rather than the political issues of the empire. The Austrian consul in Aleppo did not find this warning surprising, since, from the beginning of the war, Cemal and his bureaucrats had been striving to abolish the influence of foreign representatives. That is, Cemal was struggling for the "full independence" of the Ottoman Empire from foreign intervention.¹¹⁴

The absolute ruler of Syria was so stringent about the independence of the governmental authorities that he did not refrain from the severest sanctions against the representatives of foreign states when he thought that they had exceeded their authority. The most noteworthy event in this regard was an incident that took place between Mr. Schabinger, the German dragoman of Jaffa, and the governor of Jerusalem, Munir Bey, over the evacuation of German Jews from Jaffa. When it was decided that Jaffa would be evacuated, the citizens of the allied states had been exempted from this decision. However, as noted in Chapter 2, this exemption did not apply to the German Jews. Upon the requests of the Jews under his protection, Schabinger visited the governor of Jerusalem and demanded the extension of this decision to the German Jews. During the discussion, the dragoman compared the evacuation with the Jewish pogroms in Russia¹¹⁵ as well as harshly criticizing Cemal Pasha's actions in the evacuation of Jaffa.¹¹⁶

Thereupon, the governor reported the dragoman's remarks to Cemal Pasha.¹¹⁷ It was Palm Sunday, and Cemal Pasha immediately ordered the German consul in Jerusalem to visit him. After narrating the incident, Cemal told the consul that his representative in Jaffa had made a serious mistake, adding that if Mr. Schabinger did not apologize Cemal intended to call him to Jerusalem and deliver him to the court martial. When the consul answered this it was a serious threat; Cemal responded, "Ce n'est pas une menace. Je le ferai" (This is not a threat. I will). Moreover, in response to this incident Cemal Pasha blocked the telegraphic cipher communications and the censor-free postal service of the dragoman.¹¹⁸ He also told the governor of Jerusalem to implement his threat against the consul if the latter did not back down.¹¹⁹

In the end, the issue was resolved with the mediation of the Jerusalem consul. On the basis of Cemal's order, the governor had given a deadline – the afternoon of the next day – for Schabinger to come to the office of the governor and apologize for his actions. While Schabinger was going to the governor to deliver his apology, the consul of Jerusalem convinced Cemal Pasha to abandon his idea. The next day, the prohibitions on the dragoman's telegraphic communications and censor-free postal service were removed. On the same day, Cemal visited Jaffa and the dragoman came to him to apologize. During the conversation, Cemal interrupted him and said, "L'homme est composé de nerfs" (The man is composed of nerves). Thus the problem had been solved almost completely at Cemal's discretion.¹²⁰

A similar incident occurred involving the Spanish consul in Jerusalem, Graf Ballobar, before the capture of Jerusalem by British forces. At the beginning of the war an Italian hospital was confiscated by the Ottoman army. A chapel inside the hospital building had been protected, deemed an object of cultural significance. In the heat of the battles on the Palestinian front, the Ottoman officials requested that the Spanish consul, in his capacity as the protector of Italian interests, permit the army to use the chapel. The consul, who was on good terms with Cemal Pasha, asked to visit him. However, the governor did not issue him a travel permit to go to Damascus and instead put him under

police surveillance. Thereupon, Count Ballobar asked Cemal Pasha to visit him. Cemal stated that he would be happy to receive the consul, but asked him not to come to his headquarters to make a complaint about the governor, since consuls had no right to complain about governors.¹²¹

The governor and Count Ballobar clashed again when the Christian and Jewish clergy were removed from Jerusalem on the orders of Cemal Pasha. The Spanish consul opposed this order for the Latin patriarch, demanding that he be allowed to stay in Jerusalem, but the governor rejected his request. Upon further complaints from him, Cemal issued an order requesting him to leave the Ottoman Empire. The governor of Jerusalem similarly appealed to the Ottoman central government with the same request, claiming that the consul's only job was to hinder the works of the government there. The Latin patriarch was removed from Jerusalem.¹²²

Toward the end of his governorate in Syria, Cemal Pasha had a second conflict with the German consul in Jaffa. Shortly before the British capture of Jerusalem, the consul visited Haifa and called the people to leave the city, informing them about the arrival of British troops, thereby causing panic and fear among the people in and around Haifa. Thereupon, the consul was called to Damascus and the German ambassador was asked to dismiss him.¹²³

In addition to the consuls, Cemal Pasha did not allow any of the German officers under his command to act independently of his authority. In his treatment of the German officers, Cemal showed made his mistrust clear. On 18 April 1917, he caught Von Kress while he was corresponding personally with the German officer Feldman in İstanbul in the telegraph office. Thereupon, Cemal immediately blocked communication and sent a telegram to Feldman notifying him of the requirement that officers employed in the headquarters call the chief of the admiralty to monitor the telegraph machine when they needed to be present there personally. Additionally, he sent a telegram to Enver Pasha, and requested the issuance of a decree prohibiting such activities in order to protect the order.¹²⁴

When the Ottoman and German headquarters bypassed him and communicated with the German officers in his headquarters, Cemal responded harshly and emphasized that he was the only authority and that, therefore, the headquarters had to communicate with him on the issues of the army.¹²⁵ In a similar vein, when the German officers under his command showed a tendency to act independently, Cemal felt it necessary to remind them that they were members of the Ottoman army, rather than representatives of the German army.¹²⁶

As was shown above, in conflicts between Ottoman local authorities and German officials in Syria, Cemal consistently sided with the Ottoman bureaucrats. Such a conflict took place after the entry of the United States into the war. The Germans wanted to confiscate the American observatory (Giles?) in Beirut. However, the governor of Beirut did not authorize this operation. Thereupon, the Germans commenced lobbying activities in Constantinople to get permission to take over the observatory. Upon being informed about these

efforts, Cemal sent a telegram to Enver and requested that he put an end to the issue because "if they are successful in obtaining their demands, the governor will feel humiliated before the local people and they will think that German influence takes precedence over Ottoman authority."¹²⁷ Enver guaranteed that nothing would be done regarding the observatory and that if anything were done it would be in line with Cemal's input.¹²⁸

Cemal Pasha and German and Austrian cultural propaganda in Syria

While Cemal was trying to assert the full independence of the Ottoman Empire in Syria, German propaganda in the provinces under Cemal's rule emerged as a crucial issue. In addition to Cemal Pasha, the Ottoman officials in the area were quite aware of the Germans' intentions regarding Syria and acted to counter their activities. In 1916 the governor of Aleppo reminded the Ministry of Interior that the Germans aimed to take the old place of France in Syria. Therefore, their attempts to open schools and hospitals had to be checked for the sake of the integrity of the empire.¹²⁹

As noted in Chapter 1, the most important tool for achieving this goal was the publication of a newspaper titled *al-Sharq* to propagate the unity of Muslims around the flag of the Ottoman caliph, which was the most important aim of the policy of *Jihad* and German *Weltpolitik*. However, both Cemal Pasha and Hulusi Bey, the governor of Syria, opposed this idea on the grounds that the newspaper would contribute to the expansion of German influence in Syria. As a result, the idea of spreading German influence came to nothing.¹³⁰

Similarly, Cemal did not approve of the German plans to publish a German-friendly newspaper in Medina. Several attempts by Germany in this direction remained inconclusive and, ultimately, they had to abandon the undertaking. Moreover, Said Mehmed Me'mun, who was to publish the newspaper in Medina, was believed by the Ottoman authorities to be a German spy.¹³¹ This enterprise was blocked by the Germans after the commencement of the sharif's movement. As noted in Chapter 1, the Ottoman government established an Arabic newspaper in Medina like the *al-Sharq* newspaper, named *Hijaz*. This enterprise was put forward by Cemal Pasha to create consciousness (most likely pan-Islamic consciousness) among the people. A former professor of the Mekteb-i Sultani in Aleppo, who had stayed in Egypt for a long time, was appointed as the editor of the newspaper.¹³²

In addition to these efforts, the Germans opened halls to spread German influence in the prominent cities of Syria. The aim of these halls was to increase people's interest in Germany, informing them about the German state's level of development. Through the local people employed in these halls, the Germans had the opportunity to disseminate information about how German capital and labor could make investments that would be beneficial for Syria. Similarly, they could make contacts with the local population. The Germans placed projectors in these halls to show films. However, they only

managed to show a few war films and these failed to interest the Syrian people.¹³³ The German managers of these halls complained about the lack of films on nature and German industry, which they thought would enable them to showcase German capabilities to the Syrians.¹³⁴ The Ottoman officials were very concerned about such propaganda efforts. In May 1916, an Austrian named Goldschmidt made a trip to Anatolia with projectors to spread propaganda for the Central Powers, showing war films from the Austrian fronts. The Ottoman central government ordered the governors of the provinces he visited to monitor his activities.¹³⁵ Eventually, when he did something that raised suspicions, Goldschmidt was recalled to Istanbul.¹³⁶

Another instrument of the dissemination of the influence of a Great Power in the Ottoman Empire was to teach its language in schools. In this sense, the German Empire engaged in a long struggle in Syria during Cemal's governorate. At the beginning of 1915, when the French language was displaced in the curriculum of Ottoman schools, it was not replaced with German. Instead, in Damascus, two courses were opened to teach German.¹³⁷ According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, it was impossible to take replace the French language with another foreign language, since the national awareness of the Turkish officials had been considerably increased.¹³⁸ The introduction of the German language as a mandatory course in the *sultani* school of Damascus was achieved only as late as 14 March 1916. Faced with Cemal Pasha's resistance, the Germans had made a great effort to arrange this change in the curriculum of the most distinguished school in Syria.¹³⁹ In spite of these intense German efforts, Cemal prevented the opening of a German school in Syria. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, although Cemal Pasha treated the Germans with kindness outwardly, in fact, he was struggling against the spread of German influence.¹⁴⁰ However, Cemal did not insist on Turkish education for the technical schools, which required German knowledge for course supplements, and they were allowed to teach in German.¹⁴¹ In addition, the Austrians did not attempt to open a hospital in Damascus that would spread Austrian influence there for fear of the ruler of Syria. Instead, they chose to send Austrian nuns to Ottoman hospitals, planning to transfer them to an Austrian hospital to be opened after the war.¹⁴²

Together with their efforts to win the hearts of the urban population, the Germans tried to make contact with the Bedouin chiefs of Syria. For this purpose, some of the Germans employed in Syria visited these chiefs and promised them medals. When he learned of this, Enver Pasha sent a complaint to the German ambassador in Istanbul, because, after the abolition of the capitulations, the aim of the Ottoman government was to prevent all foreign powers from asserting their influence over the local population.¹⁴³

Although Cemal was quite distrustful of the Germans and battled to prevent their endeavors to create an area of influence – maybe a colony in the future – he did not hesitate to use German experience in his development projects in Syria. He thought that the Germans should contribute as *super-visors* in the reorganization of the Ottoman army and navy, as well as the

Ottoman administrative, financial, and education systems and the agriculture and industry of the Ottoman Empire, particularly in Syria.¹⁴⁴ In line with these considerations, Cemal employed many Germans in the service of the 4th Army. The most prominent among them was the railroad constructor Meissner Pasha, who was assigned to construct the Egyptian branch of the Hijaz Railroad for the conquest of Egypt.¹⁴⁵ For the modern development of Syrian cities, he recruited Professor Zürcher as supervisor. Similarly, for the restoration of the historical monuments of Syria, he appointed Theodor Wiegand as supervisor.¹⁴⁶

Notes

- 1 USNA, RG 59, 867.00/715, The American consul-general to the Secretary of State, Beirut, 2 November 1914.
- 2 For some studies on the relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Great Powers, see the following. For British Policy, see: Joseph Heller, *British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1914*, London: Frank Cass, 1983; for British Policy toward Syria and Palestine, see: Rashid Khalidi, *British Policy towards Syria and Palestine*, Oxford: Middle East Center for St. Antonius's College, 1980; A.L. Tibawi, *Anglo-Arab Relations and the Question of Palestine*, London: Luzac & Co.ltd., 1977. For French Policy in Syria, see: William I. Shorrock, *French Imperialism in the Middle East, 1900–1914*, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1976. For a study on the German influence in the Ottoman Empire, see: İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu*, İstanbul: İletişim, 2000. For a general study on the relations between the Great Powers and the Ottoman Empire: Kent, *The Great Powers*.
- 3 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Beirut to von Rosenberg, Beirut, 29 April 1916.
- 4 L. Bruce Fulton, "France and the End of the Ottoman Empire," in Kent, *The Great Powers*, p. 137.
- 5 Shorrock, *French Imperialism*, p. 7.
- 6 For an analysis of the Ottoman-European competition, see: Fawaz, "Foreign Presence," pp. 93–104; Philipp, "Acre," pp. 77–92.
- 7 For a study on the abolition of the capitulations, see: Küllink, *Kapitülasynların Kaldırılması*.
- 8 USNA, RG 59, 867.00/720, the American consul-general to Morgenthau, Beirut, 14 November 1914.
- 9 Ottoman actions to eliminate foreign influence in the Syrian cities caused the American consuls in Alexandretta and Latakia to appeal for a "visit" by American cruisers to these coastal cities "for the protection of the American interests": USNA, RG 59, 867.00/711, the American consul in Aleppo to Morgenthau, 26 October 1914; USNA, RG 59, 867.00/708, the American consul-general to Morgenthau, Beirut, 23 October 1914. A week later, the American consul-general proposed "to request senior American naval commander [in Beirut] to give protection by landing armed force and guarding persons or property threatened period": USNA, RG 59, 867.00/717, the American consul-general to Morgenthau, Beirut, 29 October 1914; but his proposal was refused by the American ambassador Morgenthau: USNA, RG 59, 867.00/717, Morgenthau to the American consul-general of Syria, Constantinople, 30 October 1914.
- 10 For the details of the extensions of the penetration of the Great Powers into the Ottoman Realm see the articles in: Kent, *The Great Powers*.

- 11 **HHStA**, PA 12/377, Brawer to Burian, Constantinople, 24 March 1916. For further information about the extent of French cultural influence before the war from an archival source see: **HHStA**, PA 12/314, the Writer and date are not specified.
- 12 **BOA**, BEO 4347/326022, Sadaret to Evkaf Ministry, 23 Mart 1331 (5 April 1915).
- 13 **BOA**, BEO 4367/327519, Sadaret to Ministry of Interior, 23 Temmuz 1331 (5 August 1915); **BOA**, BEO 4372/327845, Sadaret to Başkumandanlık, 30 Ağustos 1331 (12 September 1915).
- 14 **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Defrance, Alexandria, 20 November 1914.
- 15 **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 5/57, Enver to Talat, 20 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (3 December 1914).
- 16 **TNA**, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting a spy returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916.
- 17 **HHStA**, PA 12/463, Pallavicini to Burian (transmitting consul Beirut), Constantinople, 7 November 1915.
- 18 For Zeki Pasha's proclamation in the newspapers of Beirut see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb. 3/22, the governor of Syria to Ministry of Interior, 27 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (9 November 1914); **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Defrance, Alexandria, 20 November 1914; **TNA**, FO 371/2141, Rodd to Grey, Rome, 24 November 1914.
- 19 The British subjects interned at Damascus were informed by Cemal Pasha that if any bombardment took place, he would be obliged to immediately retaliate against them: **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/713, Cemal to the consul-general of Syria, 8 November 1914; **TNA**, FO 371/2483, chief of staff of Sir John Jackson Oliver [Limited] to the British gun-boat at Alexandretta, Damascus, 20 December 1914; for a description of the situation of the Entente citizens in Jerusalem by a deported priest see: **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 868/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Apostolic Missionary Amédée de Merone to Cote, 17 February 1915.
- 20 **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 10/41, 2 Mart 1331 (15 March 1915).
- 21 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 26 January 1915.
- 22 **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 6/54, Talat to Cemal, Cemal to Talat, 8 Kanun-ı Evvel 1330 (21 December 1914).
- 23 At that time, the governor of Jerusalem was complaining about the potential of these religious figures to influence the local people: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 450/67, the governor of Jerusalem to Talat, Jerusalem, 13 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (26 November 1914).
- 24 **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 11/7, the governor of Beirut to Ministry of Interior, 18 Kanun-ı Evvel 1330 (30 December 1914).
- 25 **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Defrance, Port-Said, 6 January 1915.
- 26 The head physician of the Rothschild Austrian Hospital and another physician, who had French nationality, are allowed to stay there: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 6/35, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Jerusalem, 12 Kanun-ı Evvel 1330 (25 December 1914); 900 of the pro-French religious figures were deported from Jerusalem according to the expressions of the French deportees. For details of their remarks see: **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Defrance, Alexandria, 2 January 1915.
- 27 For an example of such considerations see: **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Cote to MAE, Port-Said, 9 January 1915.
- 28 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 37; for similar statements, see: **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/730, the American consul-general to the Secretary of State, Beirut, 18 November 1914.
- 29 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 22 June 1915: Similarly, a few months later, the governor of Beirut demanded the expulsion of the protestants

- from the coastal regions into the internal regions. For details see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 489/9, Bekir Sami to Talat, 31 Ağustos 1331 (13 September 1915).
- 30 **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 14/24, Enver to Talat (transmitting Cemal), 9 Haziran 1331 (22 June 1915); **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 11/11, the governor of Beirut to Ministry of Interior, Beirut, 15 Mart 1331 (28 March 1915); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Padel to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus 20 February 1915; **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 11/16, the governor of Aleppo to Ministry of Interior, 19 Mart 1331 (2 April 1915).
 - 31 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting Humann), Constantinople, 18 March 1915. Quite the reverse, all the Entente citizens settled at Zor were expelled to Konia by the order of Cemal Pasha: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 543/35, Kamil to Talat, 5 Teşrin-i Evvel 1332 (18 October 1916).
 - 32 **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 36/30, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 4 September 1915. In another document Cemal gave the number as 64: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/33, Cemal to Enver, 12 Mart 1332. From a document regarding putting the Algerian Muhammed Utbe on a salary, it is stated that he was paid 7 qurush daily by the government. It seems clear that those exiles were salaried by the government in their places of resettlement: **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 7/1, Security General Directorate to the governorate of Ankara, 19 Haziran 1332 (2 July 1916).
 - 33 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 565/91, Azmi to Talat, Beirut, 16 Eylül 1333 (16 September 1917).
 - 34 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 60/9, Talat to the governor of Syria, 2 Kanun-ı Sani 1331 (15 January 1915); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 60/93, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Sivas, 10 Kanun-ı Sani 1331 (23 January 1915). Some unfortunate incidents also took place in this process. For example, a French citizen from Algeria who came to Damascus to go to Mecca for pilgrimage was arrested and banished to Ankara as prisoner of war with his family, consisting of 27 persons: **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 6/25, the governor of Ankara to Ministry of Interior, 1 Nisan 1332 (14 April 1915).
 - 35 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut 26 April 1916; changing their place of resettlement was dependent on the permission of the Ministry of Interior: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 29/4.
 - 36 For the decision to expel him to Ankara, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 7/51, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Syria, 12 Temmuz 1332 (25 July 1916).
 - 37 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 543/117, the governor of Bolu to Ministry of Interior, 11 Kanun-ı Sani 1332 (24 January 1917).
 - 38 Said Bey was first expelled to Ankara. But, to the contrary of the general policy of the prohibition on exiles changing their locations, he was allowed to resettle in Istanbul: **BOA**, BEO 4444/333253, Ministry of Interior to War Ministry, 26 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (9 December 1916).
 - 39 **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 7/51, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Syria, 12 Temmuz 1332 (25 July 1916).
 - 40 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 15 March 1916.
 - 41 **BOA**, DH-i.UM 2-12, Ali Münif to Talat, Beirut, 17 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (30 November 1916); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 9 December 1916.
 - 42 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 26 April 1916. For the exile of the Maronite patriarch due to his Francophile attitude see: **BOA**, HR.SYS 2267/34, Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 9 Temmuz 1332 (22 July 1916).
 - 43 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut 26 April 1916. Cemal Pasha's anti-French attitude led British officials to describe him as a Germanophile. There was almost no comment by the British or French officials interpreting Cemal's actions in Syria as part of the centralization of these lands: **TNA**, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting a spy returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916. The request of the American ambassador and the mediation

- of Talat Pasha to stop the banishment of the interpreter of the American consulate and his family did not help stop the process: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 36/30, Talat to Midhat, 1 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (14 November 1916), Midhat to Talat, 2 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (15 November 1916).
- 44 For the closure of the French institutions in Brussa and the expulsion of their staff, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 4/27, 11 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (24 November 1914). The same action was held in Siwas as well: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 37/22A, 7 Şubat 1332 (20 February 1917); for Samsun, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 33/4, 17 Kanun-ı Sani 1332 (30 January 1917).
 - 45 For the details of the policies applied to the institutions protected by France, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 8/2, 27 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (9 November 1915).
 - 46 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 47/181, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Syria, 13 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (26 November 1914); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 438/101, the governor of Beirut to Ministry of Interior, Beirut, 14 Ağustos 1330 (27 August 1914); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 440/76, the governor of Beirut to Ministry of Interior, 31 Ağustos 1330 (13 August 1914); **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 6/6, Macid to Ministry of Interior, Jerusalem, 30 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (13 December 1914); there was no telegraph machine in the *vilayet* of Syria (not Greater Syria) and Hijaz to confiscate: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 450/79, Hulusi to Talat, Damascus, 13 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (26 November 1914); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 456/64, Vehib to Talat, 22 Kanun-ı Evvel 1330 (4 January 1915); **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/707, the American consul-general to Morgenthau, 13 October 1914.
 - 47 **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 5/46, 26 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (9 December 1914).
 - 48 **HHStA**, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 10 September 1914; for the closure of the post offices see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 15 October 1914.
 - 49 **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/728, the American consul-general to the Secretary of State, 27 November 1914.
 - 50 **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/708, the American consul-general to the Secretary of State, 3 December 1914.
 - 51 For the search in Jerusalem, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 452/15, the governor of Jerusalem to Talat, Jerusalem, 22 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (5 December 1914); for Beirut, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 508/101, the governor of Beirut to Talat, Beirut, 28 Kanun-ı Sani 1331 (10 February 1915); for Damascus, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 479/4, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 23 Haziran 1331 (6 July 1331); for Aleppo, see: **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/728, the American consul-general to the Secretary of State, 27 November 1914; also see, Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 133.
 - 52 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR, 510/88, Azmi to Ministry of Interior, 10 Şubat 1331 (23 February 1915); **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/728, the American consul-general to the secretary of state, 27 November 1914.
 - 53 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the governor of Beirut to the Minister of Education in Beirut, 1 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (14 November 1914); **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/713, the American consul-general to Secretary of State, Beirut, 9 November 1914; **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/728, the American consul-general to the Secretary of State, 27 November 1914.
 - 54 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Minister of Education to the Director of Education in Beirut, 23 Nisan 1331 (6 April 1915). For some references to the deposed priests and seized properties see: **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Defrance, Alexandria, 7 January 1915; **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/728, the American consul-general to the Secretary of State, 27 November 1914.
 - 55 For the implementations in Lebanon and Syria see: **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Defrance, Alexandria, 20 November 1914; for the events in Zahle see: **TNA**, FO 371/2480, Eliot to Grey, “Situation in the Lebanon,” Athens, 31 December 1914; for Palestine see: **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Reffye to Defrance, Alexandria, 2 January 1914.

- 56 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Minister of Interior to the governor of Syria, 29 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (11 November 1914).
- 57 The Apostolic See was complaining about the Ottoman government's treatment of all the institutions protected by France as French institutions: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 8/2, Ministry of Interior to Foreign Ministry, 27 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (10 December 1914); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Löytvet to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 18 December 1914.
- 58 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 8 May 1915.
- 59 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Minister of Interior to the Director of Education in Beirut, 23 Nisan 1331 (6 April 1915).
- 60 For further information see: Martin Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya in Jerusalem: Arabismus, Osmanismus und Panislamismus im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Stuttgart: Kommissionsverlag Franz Steiner, 1991, pp. 2–3.
- 61 **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 6/6, Macid to Ministry of Interior, Jerusalem, 30 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (13 December 1914).
- 62 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 450/67, the governor of Jerusalem to Talat, Jerusalem, 13 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (26 November 1914); **HHStA**, PA 38/367, the consul of Jerusalem to Burian, Jerusalem, 7 June 1915.
- 63 **TNA**, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting a spy returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916.
- 64 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 12 April 1916. Similar remarks are also available in a British document. However, the author does not define the place and time, and there are some noticeable exaggerations: **TNA**, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting a spy returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916.
- 65 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Minister of Interior to the Director of Education in Beirut, 28 Nisan 1331 (11 April 1915). For the Ottomanization of the French orphanage in Damascus (50 children) and the settlement of the Muslim children there, see: **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Director of Education in Syria to Ministry of Education, Damascus, 26 Nisan 1331 (9 May 1915).
- 66 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Director of Education in Beirut to Ministry of Education, 26 Nisan 1331 (9 April 1915);
- 67 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, The Minister of Interior to the Director of Education in Beirut, 28 Nisan 1331 (11 April 1915). For the Ottomanization of the French Orphanage in Damascus (50 children) and the settlement of the Muslim children there, see: **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Director of Education in Syria to Ministry of Education, Damascus, 26 Nisan 1331 (9 April 1915).
- 68 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Director of Education in Syria to Ministry of Education, Damascus, 3 Mayıs 1331 (16 May 1915).
- 69 **BOA**, MF.MKT 1202/60, the Minister of Interior to the Director of Education in Damascus, 10 Haziran 1331 (23 April 1915).
- 70 The nurse wanted to convey his letter to the Catholic cardinal of Köln in Germany via the Austrian consul in Beirut. However, being afraid of a diplomatic crisis between the Ottoman Empire and his government, the consul transmitted the letter to the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Burian. For the original version of the letter and the comment of the consul see: **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 8 August 1916; for the order of the Ottoman government about the employment of the Germans and Austrians who worked in the French institutions before the war see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 9/55A, the governor of Syria to Ministry of Interior, 10 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (23 November 1914), Ministry of Interior to the governor of Syria, 11 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (24 November 1914).
- 71 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 531/86, Azmi to Talat, Beirut, 28 August 1916 (10 September 1916).
- 72 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 8 August 1916. Some Ottoman documents also show that the Muslim children were settled in the confiscated

- orphanages: **BOA**, MF. MKT 1202/60, Ministry of Interior to the governorates, 30 Mart 1331 (11 April 1915).
- 73 **BOA**, MFMKT 1202/60, the Minister of Interior to the governor of Beirut, 7 Haziran 1331 (20 June 1915); **BOA**, MF. MKT 1202/60, the Director of Education in Beirut to Ministry of Education, 10 Haziran 1331 (23 June 1915).
- 74 The details of those policies will be explained in the following section. However, for examples of such intentions see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 8 May 1915; **HHStA**, PA 12/377, Brawer to Burian, Constantinople, 24 March 1916.
- 75 As will be explained in detail below, in a report that was sent to Talat it is obvious that the Ottoman Empire was aware of the efforts of those states and was struggling against them: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 30/38, Mehmet Ali (Inspector of Education) to Ministry of Interior, 20 Teşrin-i Evvel 1332 (2 November 1916).
- 76 **BOA**, EUM 5.Şb. 9/55A, the governor of Syria to Ministry of Interior, 10 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (23 November 1914), Ministry of Interior to the governor of Syria, 11 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (24 November 1914).
- 77 The first German colony had been established in Palestine, in 1868, as an independent Christian colony: Arthur Rupp, *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet*, Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliches Komitee Verlag, 1917.
- 78 For further information about the history of German penetration in Syria, see: Ulrich Trumpener, "Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire," in Kent, *The Great Powers*, pp. 107–136; the population of two German colonies, Wilhelma and Sarona, which became the basis of the German influence in Syria, reached 3,000: **TNA**, FO 371/2482, Norman Bethwich to FO, undated.
- 79 For some comparisons between German and French investments in Syria see: Fulton, "France and the End of the Ottoman Empire."
- 80 **HHStA**, PA 12/209, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 January 1915.
- 81 For the advice of the Austrian ambassador in this regard see: **HHStA**, PA 12/210, Pallavicini to Burian, Constantinople, 9 December 1916; for a German report about this subject, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Brode to AA, Jerusalem, 24 October 1917; for a warning by the Ottoman authorities to their colleagues in Syria about the Austrian undertakings in this direction, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 5.Şb 30/38, Mehmet Ali (Inspector of Education) to Ministry of Interior, 20 Teşrin-i Evvel 1332 (2 November 1916).
- 82 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 21 January 1916.
- 83 **HHStA**, PA 12/209, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 28 January 1915.
- 84 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 31 January 1916.
- 85 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 42.
- 86 For some examples of those publications see: E. Brandenburg, *Bericht über Eine Reise in Syrien und Palaestina*, Berlin: Gesellschaft für Palaestina-Forschung, 1914; Emil Zimmermann, *Kann uns Mesopotamien eigene kolonien ersetzen?*, Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftliches Komitee Verlag, 1917; S. Killermann, *Die Blumen des heiligen Landes: Botanische Auslese einer Frühlingsfahrt durch Syrien und Palaestina*, Leipzig: Hinrichsische Buchhandlung, 1917.
- 87 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 8 May 1915.
- 88 For some examples, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 1 May 1915; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Bernstoff AA (transmitting Graf Schdenburg, Damascus), Constantinople, 21 November 1917; **BA-MA**, RM 40/678, Busse to Chief of the Admiralty, 7 February 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Rössler to Bethmann-Hollweg, Aleppo, 8 May 1915.
- 89 For some examples of the mines under the possession of the Hijaz Railroad Company, see: **BOA**, BEO 4321/324968, Evkaf Ministry to Ministry of Commerce, 27 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (10 November 1914).

- 90 **BA-MA**, RM 40/678, Busse to Chief of the Admiralty, 7 February 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Grobba to AA, Jerusalem, 23 July 1917.
- 91 Shortly before the outbreak of the war, Abd al-Rahman Pasha was about to agree with a French-Belgian company for the modernization of the agriculture on his land, but the commencement of the war caused the failure of the project. After that, the Germans became interested in his estates: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 18, Brode to Hertling, Damascus, 12 September 1918.
- 92 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 18, Brode to Hertling, Damascus, 12 September 1918.
- 93 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Graf Wedel to Bethmann-Hollweg, Vienna, 7 May 1916.
- 94 The Şeyhülislam conveyed this information from Petternich (Metternich?), the German manager of the third Chemin-de-fer branch of the Ottoman General Staff: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 52/10, Şeyhülislam to Cemal, 13 Nisan 1331 (26 April 1915).
- 95 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 52/189, Şeyhülislam to Cemal, 19 Nisan 1331 (1 May 1915).
- 96 **BOA**, A.MTZ.CL 7/295, Sadaret to Ministries of Commerce, Evkaf, and Agriculture, 28 Mayıs 1331 (10 June 1331).
- 97 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Dandini to Burian, Aleppo, 27 September 1915; **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Dandini to Czernin, Aleppo, 9 August 1917; **TNA**, FO 371/3058, Grahame to FO, Paris, 10 June 1917; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 461/84, Hulusi to Talat, Damascus, 3 Şubat 1330 (16 February 1915).
- 98 **BA-MA**, RM 5/2320, Mühlens to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Jerusalem, 22 June 1915; **HHStA**, PA 38/367, the Jerusalem consul to Burian, Jerusalem, 7 June 1915; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 572/2, Azmi to Talat, Beirut, 22 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (22 November 1917); **HHStA**, PA 12/209, Dandini to Pallavicini, Aleppo, 3 January 1915.
- 99 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 25 February 1918.
- 100 **BA-MA**, RM 5/2321, Humann to Marine-Attache, 29 November 1916.
- 101 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Mutius to Hertling, Beirut, 15 March 1918.
- 102 **BA-MA**, RM 5/2323, Grafen to the Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Constantinople, 26 February 1918; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, Constantinople, 26 June 1918.
- 103 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Stotzingen to AA, 17 November 1916.
- 104 **TNA**, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting a spy returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916.
- 105 The American consul-general in Syria reported immediately after the abolition of the capitulations that the local authorities and governors began to humiliate foreigners and the consuls: **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/707, the American consul-general to Morgenthau, Beirut, 13 October 1914.
- 106 **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/729, the American consul-general to Morgenthau, Beirut, 18 November 1914.
- 107 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Ruppin to Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin, Constantinople, 12 October 1916; for another report by the American consul-general demonstrating the changing position of the consuls with the beginning of the war, see: **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/729, the American consul-general to the Secretary of State, 27 November 1914; Dr. Ruppin confirms the remarks of the Spanish consuls about the Cemal's treatment of the consuls. A conversation conveyed by the consul between him and Cemal is worthy of attention in terms of the new position of the consuls:

Last night the *mutasarrif* received us in "his house," that is, in the former Italian consulate. In the garden there were little tables where my colleagues and I had some appetizers while waiting for the arrival of Djemal Pasha. When he appeared, he greeted us, had a moment with his subordinates and right

away sat down at our table with Heinrich Brode – the new German consul – Kraus [the Austrian consul], Rapael [the Greek consul], Glazebrook [the American consul], a German captain and me. It was my turn to bear the burden of the conversation, and Djemal announced, joking, that he had it in mind to hang me, publishing “compromising documents” that he had about my conduct and that, of course, did not refer to my lack of neutrality.

Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 97.

- 108 Ballobar, *ibid.*, p. 133.
- 109 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Ruppın to Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin, Constantinople, 12 October 1916. The intelligence report that reached the British officials gave similar information about Cemal’s relations with the Germans: **TNA**, 371/2477, the Marquess of Crewe to Bertie, 3 July 1915.
- 110 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Bernstoff to AA (transmitting consul Jerusalem), Constantinople, 21 November 1917; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Beirut to von Rosenberg, Beirut, 29 April 1916.
- 111 Sometimes any foreign intervention could make the situation worse. In the issue of the Zionist leader Ruppın’s expulsion from Palestine, the German ambassador requested that Berlin avoid any intervention since it would further frustrate Cemal Pasha and would have a negative impact on the situation: **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 11, Kühlmann to AA, Constantinople, 16 February 1917. Similarly, Ruppın himself repeated the same request in another issue to the Zionists in Germany: **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 8, Neurath to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), Constantinople, 26 January 1916.
- 112 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Dandini to Burian, Aleppo, 12 October 1916.
- 113 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, pp. 133–134.
- 114 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Dandini to Burian, Aleppo, 12 October 1916.
- 115 A pogrom (Russian: ПОГРОМ) is a form of violent riot, a mob attack directed against a minority group, and characterized by killings and destruction of their homes, properties, businesses, and religious centers. It originally and still typically refers to nineteenth- and twentieth-century attacks on Jews, particularly in the Russian Empire: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pogrom>.
- 116 **BOA**, BEO 4463/334661, Cemal to Ministry of Interior, 22 Nisan 1333 (22 April 1917); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Schabinger to Bethmann-Hollweg, Jaffa, 14 May 1917.
- 117 **BOA**, BEO 4463/334661, Cemal to Ministry of Interior, 22 Nisan 1333 (22 April 1917).
- 118 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Brode to Bethmann-Hollweg, Jerusalem, 30 June 1917; see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Ahmed Münir to Schabinger, Jaffa, 1 Nisan 1333 (1 April 1917).
- 119 **BOA**, BEO 4463/334661, Cemal to Ministry of Interior, 22 Nisan 1333 (22 April 1917).
- 120 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Schabinger to Bethmann-Hollweg, Jaffa, 14 May 1917; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Brode to Bethmann-Hollweg, Jerusalem, 30 June 1917; see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Ahmed Münir to Schabinger, Jaffa, 1 Nisan 1333 (1 April 1917).
- 121 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Brode to Waldburg, Jerusalem, 25 August 1917. Ballobar briefly touches upon this issue in his diaries: Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, pp. 165–166. It is probably because he avoided writing on “dangerous” issues in his diaries. For example, while he was narrating the competition between Enver and Cemal he noted this remark in his diaries: “I do not continue because these simple notes are becoming excessively dangerous”: Ballobar, *ibid.*, p. 80.
- 122 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 5/51, Cemal to Enver (transmitting governor Jerusalem), 23/11/1333; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 572/92, İzzet to Talat, Jerusalem,

- 2 Kanun-ı Sani (Teşrin-i Sani?) 1333 (2 January 1918); **PA-AA**, Bernstoff to AA (transmitting Jerusalem consul), Jerusalem, 21 November 1917.
- 123 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 1/8, Enver to Talat, Damascus, 16 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (16 November 1917); the same document is also available at: **BOA**, HR.SYS 2169/31, Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 17 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (17 November 1917).
- 124 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/10, Cemal to Enver, 12 Nisan 1333 (12 April 1917).
- 125 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 9/23, Enver To Cemal, 8 Nisan 1331; **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 5/47, Cemal to Enver, 29 Temmuz 1333 (29 July 1917).
- 126 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 168, Ds. 730, Fih. 110–14, Cemal to Von Kress, 6 Mayıs 1333 (6 May 1917); Cemal also advised Enver not to allow the German headquarters in Berlin to correspond directly with the German Military Mission in Istanbul, skipping Envers himself in his capacity as the commander-in-chief of the Ottoman armies: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 9/23, Enver To Cemal, 8 Nisan 1331 (8 April 1917).
- 127 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 12/144, Cemal to Enver, 9 Mayıs 1333 (9 May 1917).
- 128 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 12/144, Enver to Cemal, 9 Mayıs 1333 (9 May 1917).
- 129 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 520/16, Mustafa to Talat, Aleppo, 4 Mayıs 1332 (17 May 1916).
- 130 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 489/27, Hulusi to Talat, Damascus, 2 Eylül 1331 (2 September 1915). It is stated in the dispatch of Hulusi Bey that the first telegram on this subject was sent on 10 August 1915.
- 131 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 39, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 20 August 1916.
- 132 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 December 1916.
- 133 The aim of showing such films was to increase patriotic feeling among the people: **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, “Straf-und Coercitifmassregeln,” Damascus, 14 November 1915.
- 134 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 40, Neufeld to Wesendock, 23 December 1916.
- 135 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 61/115, Talat to the governor of Konia, 11 Mayıs 1332 (24 May 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 519/9, the governor of Syria to Talat, Damascus, 25 Nisan 1332 (8 May 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 519/108, the governor of Jerusalem to Talat, Jerusalem, 2 Mayıs 1332 (15 May 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 522/32, the governor of Adana to Talat, Adana, 23 Mayıs 1332 (5 June 1916).
- 136 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 63/199, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Syria, 21 Nisan 1332 (4 May 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 63/210, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Syria, 23 Nisan 1332 (6 May 1916).
- 137 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 22 January 1915.
- 138 **HHStA**, PA XII/377, Brawer to Burian, Constantinople, 24 March 1916; for the resistance of the Turkish officials to the teaching of German, see: **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 18 January 1917.
- 139 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 21 March 1916.
- 140 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 31 January 1916.
- 141 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 18 January 1917.
- 142 **HHStA**, PA 12/210, Pallavicini to Burian, Constantinople, 9 December 1916.
- 143 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 52/176, Talat to the governor of Syria, 13 Nisan 1331 (26 April 1915).
- 144 For a letter conveying these remarks from Cemal, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 12, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, 21 January 1916.
- 145 Walter Pick, “Meissner Pasha and the Construction of Railways in Palestine and Neighbouring Countries,” in Gad Gilbar (ed.), *Ottoman Palestine, 1800–1914*, Leiden: Brill, 1990, p.181.
- 146 For his activities in Syria, see: Theodor Wiegand, *Halbmond im Letzten Viertel: Archaeologische Reiseberichte*, Munich: Bruckmann München, 1970.

5 In the pursuit of ideal cities and citizens

Parallel to his efforts to check or eliminate the regional intermediaries preventing the penetration of the state into the Syrian realm and his struggle against foreign influence, Cemal promoted policies aimed at producing ideal citizens for the Ottoman Empire. In particular, his cultural and educational activities, which sometimes worked to protect and maintain the Arab cultural and intellectual legacy, may urge academics who repeatedly write about the Turkification policies of the CUP to reconsider their arguments.¹ As will be clarified below, Cemal concentrated primarily on increasing the loyalties of the Syrians and on instilling in them an Ottoman consciousness. As a result of Cemal's cultural and educational enterprises, as well as conscription, the behaviors of the Syrians would be Ottomanized in a way that would enable the Ottoman state to "shape, coordinate, control, and guide" their conduct. In the same context, he made important adjustments to the urban space to create visibly modern cities that would facilitate the state's surveillance capabilities following the removal of social intermediaries. On the other hand, in Cemal's viewpoint, a modernized city would show the Syrians that their state was as developed as those in the West and would serve to make them more devoted to the ideal of imperial unity.

To be more specific, the Syrians were introduced to the state through their responsibilities toward it and through their civil rights regarding it. The first encounter of the Syrians with the duties of citizenship was the further extension of the compulsory military service to Muslim and non-Muslim Arabs and Jews at the outbreak of the war. This was to become one of the most burdensome processes of the period for the Arab citizens. At the same time, a project aimed at the Ottomanization of Syrian consciousness through cultural and educational activities was initiated. Almost all foreign educational institutions were either confiscated or closed as part of this plan. It is worth mentioning, however, that from the beginning of Ottoman modernization, which can be dated back to the reign of Mahmud II, there were educational institutions intended to create a sense of Ottomanness among the subjects of the empire. What made this period special was the absence of any foreign competition. Finally, some construction projects were undertaken to make Syrian cities more "penetrable"² for the state.

Although the conscription process and educational activities organized by Cemal Pasha have barely been touched upon in the existing literature, the construction works he undertook have been more or less sufficiently analyzed already. Hasan Kayalı has done a study summarizing the public works initiated by Cemal Pasha in Syria. He emphasizes that Cemal's activities in this sense cannot be separated from Ottoman imperial policy in this period aiming at the integration of the imperial realm in the face of grave internal and external challenges.³ After taking up these issues, this chapter will proceed to a discussion of the characteristics of Cemal's ideology as reflected in these public works. Together with his conscription, educational, and cultural policies, Cemal's construction works enable us to understand the aims of his presence in Syria.

“Aux armes, citoyens!”: conscripting the Syrians for the Ottoman army

Unfortunately, [the desire] to lay down one's life for the peace of the fatherland has still not developed sufficiently in our country [*vatan*] and is not regarded as an honorable duty. It cannot be denied that [this sentiment] has not progressed in some part of people due to the ignorance and ineptitude [*marifetsizlik*] that they have been exposed to, but, sorrowfully, the majority of those who grew up in a scholarly and trained environment preferred to serve in the safe and more comfortable rear guard rather than doing actual battle in war. It is understood that, in our intellectual and national education, the great feelings like devotion to and love of the fatherland and the necessity of sacrificing everything for it, do not constitute the purpose of life [*gaye-i âmâl*].⁴

With the emergence of modern states, defending one's country against the “enemy” became one of the most important responsibilities of citizens. In this regard, beginning with Mahmud II, the Ottoman Empire obliged its citizens to perform compulsory military service.⁵ However, the Arabs of Syria were generally exempted from conscription until the outbreak of World War I. During the war, the Syrian realm was subjected to conscription on a scale never before seen in its history under Ottoman rule. In this section, the process of recruitment in Syria, as one of the most important requirements of citizenship, and the Syrians' reactions to it will be analyzed.

Mobilization for the conquest of Egypt

Immediately after the commencement of mobilization at the beginning of August 1914, with drums and shrill pipes (*ebvak*), all those who were liable to military service between 20 and 40 years of age were required to register with the recruitment offices. Placards were hung on the walls of the cities with the title “*Seferberlik*” (mobilization), announcing martial law and the requirement of registering for the draft and threatening that any delay would

be grounds for trial in the military courts and heavy punishment. The recruitment offices were strict on the issue of registration. Soldiers patrolled the streets of the cities and warned the conscripts to get their registration certificates for military service. Otherwise, they would be arrested after a week. Registration was strictly implemented in the villages, too. The authorities sent mounted police to the *muhtars* to deliver the placards mentioned above to inform village inhabitants.⁶ Following this, a campaign of intimidation was put into effect in the villages and cities of Syria to demonstrate the seriousness of the government's attitude.⁷ Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that all these orders were valid for the Christians as well.⁸ However, as mistrusted citizens, they were usually employed in the labor battalions, cleaning the streets and performing heavy-duty road and railroad construction.⁹ The only exemptions provided by Cemal Pasha were for the Druze and the Lebanese, to keep them satisfied and prevent their rebellion against the Ottoman government.¹⁰ As explained in Chapter 3, another exemption was made by Cemal for the Armenian refugees, to ease their conditions in the years following the war. In addition, the Hijaz, Yemen, and Asir, mainly populated by Bedouin tribes, were exempted from the mobilization.¹¹

As a result of this process, the men of Syria left all their work aside to register at the recruitment offices within a week so they could avoid arrest by the soldiers patrolling the streets. Those between the ages of 20 and 25 were registered as regular soldiers, while those between the ages of 25 and 40 were registered as auxiliaries. State officials also had to be registered. However, after a week, the central government ordered that employees of the post and telegraph offices, policemen, teachers, and judges be exempted.¹² Subsequently, those between 16 and 25, and those older than 45, were partially exempted from military service and were instead registered to the labor battalions and forced to work in the farmlands.¹³ However, the sons and relatives of figures who were closer to the government or who could otherwise influence the military authorities regarding their place of appointment were employed in easier jobs in their hometowns. However, Cemal Pasha eventually issued an order prohibiting soldiers from performing their military service in their native countries.¹⁴

The recruitment process was so successful that, according to a report from the Austrian consul in Damascus, on the eighteenth day of the mobilization, the number of conscripted Syrians had reached 52,000. They were distributed throughout the various regions of Syria, most likely as a precaution against the possibility of an Entente invasion.¹⁵ As for the social impact of this process, far-reaching conscription, on the one hand, and the fact that it soon became apparent that the Ottomans would enter into the war, on the other, created a panic among the people in the cities and villages.¹⁶ According to the Austrian consul, in the coastal regions, this fear was due to the possibility of being massacred in a bombardment by the Entente in the event of a declaration of war.¹⁷ The Christians of Syria were anxious about the possibility of massacres against them by Syria's Muslims.¹⁸ Many families in Beirut, both

Muslim and Christian, left the city and withdrew to Mount Lebanon. The local government took some measures to prevent this mass exodus and tried to restrict journeys to the district of Lebanon.¹⁹ A warship was sent to Latakia to assuage the people's fear.²⁰ The Ottoman officials in Beirut were also fearful of an invasion and, consequently, the government and municipal archives were sent to Damascus.²¹

It is not easy to claim that, in the beginning, the Arabs were well disposed toward compulsory military service. The disciplinary character of military life led them to try every means to avoid conscription, since it was alien to them. Alexander Aaronsohn, who was conscripted together with the Arabs, describes the hard conditions of the newly conscripted Syrians at the beginning of the process, making references to their unwillingness to be disciplined:

To those wild people the protracted discipline of military training is simply a purgatory, and for weeks before the recruiting officers are due, they dose themselves with powerful herbs and physics and fast, and nurse sores into being until they are in a really deplorable condition. Some of them go so far as to cut off a finger or two. The officers, however, have learned to see beyond these little tricks, and few Arabs succeeded in wriggling through their drag-net. I have watched dozens of Arabs being brought in to the recruiting office on camels or horses, so weak were they, and welcomed into the service with a severe beating – the sick and the shamblers sharing the same fate. Thus it often happens that some of the new recruits die after their first day of garrison life.²²

The situation during the training for the soldiers was not a familiar one and the Arabs found it difficult to adapt. However, once they completed their training their performance as soldiers was satisfactory. Aaronsohn describes the process of training as follows:

From morning till night, it was drill, drill and again drill ... Whole weeks were spent in grinding into the Arabs the names of the different parts of the rifle; weeks more went to teaching them to clean it – although it must be said that, once they had mastered these technicalities, they were excellent shots. Their efficiency would have been considerably greater if there had been more target-shooting. From the very first, however, we felt that there was a scarcity of ammunition. This shortage the drill-masters, in a spirit of compensation, attempted to make up by abundant severity. The whip of soft, flexible, stinging leather, which seldom leaves the Turkish officer's hand, was never idle.²³

In spite of such problems, the propaganda opportunity provided by the Egyptian campaign facilitated the work of Cemal Pasha and the Ottoman authorities, both by motivating the newly conscripted soldiers and by calming the panic of the public. Demonstrations were held in the Syrian cities by

Muslims to increase the people's morale.²⁴ They used propaganda to show that they were strong enough to overcome the Entente's threat and to conquer Egypt, hoping to ease the people's fear and increase their trust in the government. First, the Unionist papers organized a campaign aiming to "prove that Europe, in the past, obtained from Turkey large concessions through threats only, much more than that was got through war. They reminded the Moslems of the case of Adrianople, which they would have lost if they had listened to European threats – it is now a Turkish City."²⁵ They also circulated rumors assuring the Syrians that thousands in Egypt would join the Islamic cause as soon as the war began. The way they caused these rumors to be circulated was as follows: "The Vali [*sic*] and Senior Officers would talk about it to some natives, who are asked to keep it as a secret. These latter circulate it at once 'secretly' to reassure Mohammedans, [*sic*] and so on."²⁶ Similarly, the Syrian people's fear of a possible invasion from the coast was eliminated by Turkish officers by way of a convincing propaganda campaign arguing that the Entente's navy could only occupy the coasts. In the interior, the Ottomans were better prepared and better armed and, therefore, able to defeat the invaders.²⁷

The great majority of the soldiers who participated in the canal expedition were newly conscripted Arab soldiers. Aaronsohn estimates the number of soldiers in Syria at about 150,000 men. Of these, only 20,000 were from Anatolia. The others had been recruited from Syria.²⁸ Therefore, it was essential Cemal Pasha motivate them in their new jobs. To increase the new soldiers' enthusiasm for military service and war, Cemal Pasha used both *Jihad* propaganda and the argument that the Egyptians would revolt against British rule. He employed many Arab scholars within the body of the army before and during the first attack against Egypt to preach to the Arab soldiers on horseback. They strolled around all the camps and delivered vehement speeches to the Arab soldiers. Their orations were so influential among the rank and file Arab soldiers that some had fits of hysterics from the excited preaching.²⁹ As noted, Cemal motivated soldiers by stressing the Egyptians' readiness to rebel. The remarks of two Arab officers who joined the Egyptian expedition and later deserted to the Entente while fighting on the Caucasus front provide a glimpse into the state of mind of the soldiers and officers who were fascinated with idea of conquering Egypt:

The soldiers were cheered up by the assurance that there would be hardly any fighting in Egypt, and that as soon as they reached the Suez Canal the Egyptians would rise against the English and welcome the Turkish Army with open arms. The troops would be treated royally in Egypt, and live on the fat of the land. At that time the troops were well fed, well clothed and paid regularly, even two or three months in advance. There seemed to be plenty of gold and silver coins then.³⁰

These remarks demonstrate that the promise of war spoils (*ganimet*), a traditional Ottoman means of motivation for war, was used to increase the

enthusiasm of the soldiers in the expedition. Cemal also cited prominent figures of Islamic history to encourage the Arabs in the *Jihad*. He distributed patriotic leaflets singing the praises of historical heroes like Tarek ben Ziad.³¹

The conscription of Christians and Jews was also used as propaganda to gain the support of the Muslim population. After the recruitment, they mostly served in the labor battalions and in the unappreciated jobs in the cities, such as garbage collection and road cleaning. Most of them were teachers, builders, artists, etc.³² Aaronsohn explains the purpose of this action with these words:

The final blow came one morning when all the Jewish and Christian soldiers of our regiment were called out and told that henceforth they were to serve in the *taboor amlieh* [*sic*], or working corps. The object of this action, plainly enough, was to conciliate and flatter the Mohammedan population, and at the same time to put the Jews and Christians, who for the most part favored the cause of the Allies, in a position where they would be least dangerous. We were disarmed; our uniforms were taken away, and we became hard-driven "gangsters." I shall never forget the humiliation of that day when we, who, after all, were the best-disciplined troops of the lot, were first herded to our work of pushing wheelbarrows and handling spades, by grinning Arabs, rifle on shoulder. We were set to building the road between Saffed and Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee – a link in the military highway from Damascus to the coast, which would be used for the movement of troops in case the railroad should be cut off.³³

In a similar vein, Khalil Sakakini, a Palestinian Christian, Orthodox Arab, educator, scholar, and poet and one of the prominent Arab nationalists,³⁴ described in his diaries the jobs of the non-Muslims during their military service:

Today a large number of Christians were recruited as garbage collectors to Bethlehem and Bait Jala. Each was given a broom, a shovel, and a bucket and they were distributed in the alleys of the town. Conscripts would shout at each home they passed, "send us your garbage." The women of Bethlehem looked out from their windows and wept. No doubt this is the ultimate humiliation. We have gone back to the days of bondage in Roman and Assyrian days.³⁵

The older conscripts from these communities were particularly liable to be employed in such jobs. A Muslim soldier, Ihsan Turjman, narrated the difficult work of these soldiers and his disapproval of this practice:

Rumors abounded today indicating that our military command was to form a battalion made up mainly of Christian and Jewish citizens to clean the city. This morning while walking to my work at the

Commissariat I came across several Jewish citizens, almost all above 40 years of age, holding brooms and cleaning the streets. I was horrified by this scene. Every few minutes a conscript would stand aside breathing from fatigue. How cruel can their commanders be? Wouldn't it be better if the military had hired a number of younger cleaners through the municipal services and solved the problem of these sods?³⁶

As a result of all this propaganda, according to a report from the British official Clayton, with the help of the Holy War propaganda against Egypt, "the constant association of Turkish Governors and officers with Syrian Mohammedans had a net result of gaining the sympathies of the Mohammedan Syrian public," and succeeded in winning the wholehearted support of the Muslim people and soldiers, associating them with the cause of saving Egypt from the yoke of the infidels prior to the first attack against Egypt.³⁷ The process of persuading the Arabs to support the Holy War is depicted by Aaronsohn as follows:

[Upon the Ottoman declaration of war against the Entente] the Arabs made many bitter remarks against Germany. "Why didn't she help us against the Italians during the war for Tripoli?" they said. "Now that she is in trouble she is drawing us into the fight." Their opinions, however, soon underwent a change. In the first place, they came to realize that Turkey had taken up arms against Russia; and Russia is considered first and foremost the arch-enemy. German reports of German successes also had a powerful effect on them. They began to grow boastful, arrogant; and the sight of the plundering of Egyptian, Jews, and Christians convinced them that a very desirable regime was setting in.³⁸

He also depicts the sentiments of the people in the street before the Egyptian expedition with these striking remarks:

A few weeks before the advance on Suez, I was in Jaffa, where the enthusiasm and excitement had been at feverpitch. Parades and celebrations of all kinds in anticipation of the triumphal march into Egypt were taking place, and one day a camel, a dog, and a bull, decorated respectively with the flags of Russia, France, and England, were driven through the streets. The poor animals were horribly maltreated by the natives, who rained blows and flung filth upon them by way of giving concrete expression to their contempt for the Allies.³⁹

It can also be inferred from the diaries of Khalil Sakakini that not all the Christians were against the Ottoman Empire. As conveyed by Adel Manna, in his article on Sakakini's diaries, the latter felt himself on the Ottoman side. He feared that the Ottoman state would be defeated by the British forces at the canal. Sakakini refers to the Ottoman army in his diaries as "our army"

and describes the British army as "the enemy." He was afraid of the defeat of the Ottoman armies by Great Britain due to exhaustion, thirst, and hunger in the desert.⁴⁰

Loss of motivation, the burden of discipline, desertion, and banditry

In spite of gaining such broad support for the Ottoman army in Syria before the first attempt to conquer Egypt, the failure of the expedition and the subsequent change in the direction of Cemal Pasha's policies caused a loss of motivation among the soldiers.⁴¹ In particular, his despotic policies against Arabs from all sections of society and the hard conditions of military service, which the Arabs were unaccustomed to, led to increasing dissatisfaction among the Arab soldiers in Cemal's army⁴² and probably made the aims of military service declared at the beginning of the war meaningless for them. The changing attitude of the Arab soldiers after the first expedition was depicted in Aaronsohn's memoirs with the following remarks:

Now, however, all was changed. The Arabs, who take defeat badly, turned against the authorities who had got them into such trouble. Rumors circulated that Djemal Pasha had been bought by the English and that the defeat at Suez had been planned by him, and persons keeping an ear close to the ground began to hear muttering of a general massacre of Germans. In fact, things came within an ace of a bloody outbreak. I knew some Germans in Jaffa and Haifa who firmly believed that it was all over with them.⁴³

Furthermore, the Turkish junior officers' disregard for Islamic prohibitions (such as that against drinking alcohol) led the Arab soldiers to ask themselves how they could be led in a *Jihad* by these officers who disregarded Quranic precepts.⁴⁴ According to the diaries of Ihsan Turjman, the military command was distributing circulars every day "warning soldiers and officers against frequenting the cafés and the beer halls [*bira-khanate*], upon threat of imprisonment and expulsion from the service."⁴⁵ Similarly, as can be inferred from the same source, Cemal Pasha's opulent celebrations with alcohol disturbed the Arab soldiers.⁴⁶

Loss of motivation, the worsening conditions in the military barracks,⁴⁷ and the Arabs' unfamiliarity with the discipline of military life caused a shift in conscription policy after the first attack against Egypt by force. The experience of Ihsan Turjman as a newly recruited soldier demonstrates this lack of familiarity with military discipline. One day Turjman wanted to buy a pair of new white shoes. He was so excited about his new shoes that, according to him, when he went to bed he dreamed of his new shoes and could hardly wait for sunrise so he could put them on.⁴⁸ The next day, when he went to the military headquarters, he met with the following reaction to his shoes:

Everybody at HQ kept reminding me, "Soldiers are not allowed to wear white shoes." Before lunchtime the *aghlokomandati* [work commander] [*sic*] Muhammad Nahhas Effendi said to me, "Who told you that you can wear these shoes? I had never seen a common soldier wearing a pair of white shoes until you showed up. I strongly advise you to take them off immediately. If Ruşen Bey or Nihad Bey or any other officer sees you, he will deduct it from your salary and give you a hefty fine." In the midst of the chaos we were in, I doubted that any of them would notice, even if I wore them for the rest of my miserable life. Nevertheless when I went to have lunch. I changed my shoes to put an end to this ridiculous tirade.⁴⁹

The disciplined character of military service and the lack of motivation paved the way for the Arabs' hatred of conscription.⁵⁰ According to the remarks of a German officer, following the operation against Egypt, both Muslims and Christians came to hate military service. They were therefore conscripted by force. It was common to see conscripted men being taken to the military barracks in chains on the streets of Damascus, Jerusalem, and Aleppo. Consequently, most of the Arabs saw the army as an oppressor and exploiter and resisted recruitment. Once they were conscripted for military service, there they would find poor salary, malnutrition, and mistreatment. The daily ration of a soldier in the army was half a loaf of bread and an orange. When they fell behind because of exhaustion, they were beaten mercilessly by their Turkish officers.⁵¹ Not surprisingly, in a detachment subordinated to the previously mentioned German officer, 10 percent of the soldiers had deserted during relocation to another military site.⁵²

The fact that Arabs constituted a majority among the soldiers in Syria, combined with their dissatisfaction with the conditions of military service, caused Cemal Pasha to worry about the possibility of a rebellion among the soldiers being instigated by pro-Entente officers. Therefore, in the summer of 1915, according to the remarks of the two Arab officers who deserted to the British side, as well as Chief of Staff Ali Fuad Erden, Cemal decided to send some Arab officers and troops to Gallipoli. The decision, however, was kept secret and the troops were told that orders had come from Constantinople to send them to Mount Lebanon. At Aleppo, a proclamation was read to the troops that the sultan, informed of their brilliant deeds in the fighting at the canal, was very anxious to see the troops and confer honors upon them, and that they would be charged with the defense of Constantinople. Meanwhile, between Damascus and Aleppo, 20 men deserted, throwing themselves out of the windows of the slow-moving train in the night.⁵³

Transfer from Syria to the other fronts was the most unbearable thing for the Arab soldiers and their families. When military trains were passing through the families of these soldiers would fill the stations. Halide Edib describes the scene in these stations in her memoirs:

A hundred voices, mostly women, called shrill and guttural, "*Ya Mohammed, Ya Abdurrahman, Ya Abdullah*." Then a few men's voices joined in graver tones, "*Ya Oummi*" (O mother) ... The women whose husbands and sons were in the army had come to the station because a military train was passing and there was a chance of meeting their men. They were wringing their hands and calling in inexpressible excitement to the soldiers in the cars. Some had found their men, and there was kissing and love-making going on in its naivest and warmest form.⁵⁴

Consequently, during the transportation process, most of the soldiers found some way to escape from the trains. A conversation between Halide Edib and a Turkish sergeant during her travels indicates the extent of desertion during transfers from one front to another. Halide Edib warned the sergeant due to his harsh treatment of the Arab soldiers, telling him: "They are as weak as women. Don't strike him." The answer of the sergeant revealed the outcome of transfers and the extent of desertion:

I start with two hundred, and by the time they reach the next station, they become less than forty. They have no endurance, and they give one no end of trouble. I do not like it. They are always after their women; they would rather be shot as deserters than fight; and I would rather go to the firing-line than transport Arabs.⁵⁵

The difficulties resulting from communication problems, the nature of military life, and lack of motivation made life in the army more difficult for the Arab soldiers. According to a German officer, the forceful conscription of the Arabs and the lack of patriotic feeling among them made things difficult in the Syrian army.⁵⁶ Sometimes the hardships of military life became so unbearable for them that they seriously considered committing suicide.⁵⁷ They had to be held together with the iron fist of Cemal Pasha. Furthermore, the soldiers under Cemal's command had to understand the orders of their officers in a foreign language, that is, Turkish. Similarly, the Turkish officers were far from understanding the mentality of the Arabs under their command.⁵⁸

As a result of all these factors, military recruitment became a nightmare for the Arabs liable to conscription. According to a report from a German official employed in Syria, the Arab conscripts used every means to avoid military service. It was impossible to find a single member of a well-to-do family in the army. These families paid the exoneration tax to avoid service. Many others strove to find a job that would exempt them, such as working in railroad administration. A few Arab soldiers deserted to Egypt, and some hid in Lebanon. Quite a few of them joined the sharif's troops following their approach to Syria.⁵⁹

A considerable number of Arab soldiers also deserted into the mountainous regions of Syria. Some of them created bands of brigands in the mountains, while others hid among the Bedouin and the Druze villages. The brigands

could be found almost everywhere in Syria and attacked soldiers and railroad stations, causing important losses. In the beginning, the deserter-brigands gathered in the rocky Ledjah Highlands located above Hauran, which was almost unsettled. Although their exact numbers were uncertain, in September 1915, that is, at the end of the first year of the mobilization, they had become a significant enough presence to necessitate an operation to capture them. Before the operation, Cemal Pasha's troops, consisting of 8,000 men supported with artillery, pretended to be parading near Ledjah before suddenly launching their attack. Because of the mountainous character of the district and the hostility of the Bedouins and the Druze in the nearby regions this operation resulted in losses for Cemal's troops.⁶⁰ However, the operation was completed quickly. The deserters did not resist the troops. A small number of Bedouins supporting them were captured along with their families and brought as hostages to Damascus.⁶¹ After the conclusion of the uprising, they were sent into exile to Sivas.⁶² However, this operation did not succeed in completely eliminating the presence of the deserters there. As explained will be explained in detail in Chapter 6, the deserters provided considerable support for the rebellion of the Bedouins in Hauran, which created a great disturbance there.⁶³

Moreover, the operations also failed to stop new desertions or put an end to the deserters' banditry. Many telegrams can be found in the Ottoman Archives from the governors regarding the abundance of desertions and the authority-defying activities of the deserters. Capturing them did not solve the problem, either. Once captured, a deserter could easily escape from the hands of the army. In May 1917, the *kaymakam* of Cizre complained about the negligence of the recruitment offices in preventing soldiers from deserting.⁶⁴ Similarly, in November 1917, the Ministry of War asked the Ministry of Interior to warn civil officials in Janin, Acre, and Tabariya to devote more attention to pursuing absentees and deserters, emphasizing the need to capture deserters to maintain discipline in the army.⁶⁵ Three months later, the governor of Beirut explained in his response on behalf of the local authorities that most of the absentees and deserters were captured as a result of the efforts of the local authorities.⁶⁶ The situation was no different in the district of Zor; only 87 of 2,973 deserters were captured according to statistics sent to İstanbul in July 1917.⁶⁷ In an attack by 14 deserters against the gendarmerie battalions of Bika al-Aziz on November 23, 1916, two were captured after being wounded.⁶⁸

There were also bands created by the political opposition in and around Baalbek. Some members of the Asely, Shahab, Haidar, and Melhame families, who had been ordered into exile by Cemal Pasha because of their relations with the Arabist movement, created a gang in Baalbek. Most of them were also liable for military service.⁶⁹ According to Governor Tahsin Bey, they killed seven soldiers and wounded four. Tahsin Bey created a Circassian volunteer unit to fight them. He did not use the gendarmerie regiments since they primarily consisted of native Arabs. In order to facilitate a more active effort against these

gangs, the governor dismissed the *kaymakam* of Baalbek and requested the appointment of a more active one.⁷⁰ After negotiations, most of the gang members abandoned brigandry and Cemal Pasha ended their pursuit.⁷¹

In May 1918, incidents of brigandry once again increased around Baalbek. Between Bekaa and Rayak, the Matwali Gangs under the leadership of Kasim Melham began to engage in banditry.⁷² Thereupon, army troops and gendarmes in the region carried out an operation against these groups. According to Tahsin Bey, the Matwalis had been disturbing the movements of the army and causing disorder in the region for a long time. The operation was conducted with two artillery pieces and a great number of troops because of the large size of the bandit groups.⁷³ Reconnaissance flights were conducted to locate them. As a result of the operation the bandit groups were dispersed in Baalbek and Lebanon.⁷⁴

Toward the end of the war, incidents of brigandry became frequent due to difficult living conditions at the time. In August 1918, in and around Saida, Sur, and Mercin, the deserters had been organized by a machine gun officer and were equipped with bombs and rifles. According to the governor of Lebanon, they incited the people in the region against the government. These brigands were operating under the auspices of Kamil Bey al-Asad, the deputy for Beirut in the Ottoman Parliament, and his brother Abd al-Qadir Bey al-Asad. Upon the discovery of documents in the brigands' possession, the Asad brothers were called to the governor's office for interrogation.⁷⁵

In addition to military operations against the deserted soldiers, Cemal Pasha also used other measures. In the beginning, he chose to hand down heavy punishments against deserters to discourage further desertions. In this regard, at the end of March 1915, two soldiers were hanged at the gates of Jaffa.⁷⁶ Similarly, two others were sentenced to death in Damascus. The Damascene deserters were also members of the Arabist Party. Therefore, the Austrian consul in Damascus thought that they had been hanged because of their political activities.⁷⁷

Another measure that was taken to prevent desertions to the Entente or the sharif was to send the families of deserted soldiers into exile in Anatolia. When a soldier joined the Entente's or the sharif's troops his entire family was expelled from Syria.⁷⁸ In addition, Cemal also exiled those who encouraged soldiers to desert.⁷⁹ He also used religion to persuade the soldiers of the virtues of defending their country. For this purpose, in Friday prayers the preachers admonished soldiers to refrain from desertion.⁸⁰

When Ottoman rule came to a close in Jerusalem, one of the happiest groups was that of the Arab conscripts who had been freed from the burdens of military service. According to the diaries of the Palestinian musician Wasif Jawhariyeh, "Many of the Arab young men, both Muslim and Christian, the majority of whom were conscripted for the Turkish army in Jerusalem, had changed their army uniforms into civilian clothes in a funny way."⁸¹ However, they continued to wear some parts of their military uniforms, likely due to the shortage of civilian clothing at that time. As explained by Wasif, who had

also been freed from military service: "The new situation put our minds at ease and things improved for us. We had got rid of the Turks and, thank God, we were free from army service."⁸²

As for the political affiliation of these deserters, although some of the soldiers took the side of Sharif Hussein, it can hardly be proven that they had nationalist aspirations. First, the great majority of Arab conscripts were illiterate. Second, they were very ignorant about both Ottoman politics and general world politics. Aaronsohn's description of their political discussions shows this very clearly:

Politics, of which they have amazing ideas, also came in discussion. Napoleon Bonaparte and Queen Victoria are still living figures to them; but (significantly enough) they considered the Kaiser king of all the kings of this world, with the exception of the Sultan, whom they admitted to equality.⁸³

Even the strongest political dissidents, like Ihsan Turjman, described things belonging to the Ottoman Empire as "ours," although he was frustrated by the state's wartime measures.

Conscription emerged as a very influential factor in Syria during the war period, giving a new form to relations between the Ottoman state and its citizens in the Syrian realm. At the beginning of the war, with the impact of pan-Islamist propaganda, the majority of Syrian Muslims supported military mobilization. However, later on, Syrians began to resist recruitment due to the slowdown of the preparations for a second expedition, worsening living conditions, unfamiliarity with military life, and the increasing impact of Cemal Pasha's despotic rule in Syria. Incidents of desertion increased considerably. As explained above, they created gangs and supported the Bedouins' revolt against military requisitions. However, given their level of knowledge of politics, it can hardly be claimed that these soldiers had deserted out of Arab nationalist motives. On the other hand, when Cemal Pasha's long-term plans for Syria are taken into consideration, it is clear that he did not regard the short-term alienation of the Syrians from the Ottoman state as a matter of particular importance.

The Ottomanization of education in Syria

Another tool used by Cemal Pasha to create the ideal citizen in Syria was mass education. As is known, with the development of the modern state's control over its citizens, mass education became one of the most instrumental means of influencing the feelings and behaviors of citizens toward the new rules of modern life and toward the state within the framework of a new self-identity, mainly inspired by the national characteristics of the intended

community. Beginning with Mahmud II, the Ottoman Empire also used education to create a new Ottoman identity embracing all Ottomans, Muslim and non-Muslim, at an equal level, on the model of the newly emerging Western national states.⁸⁵ In this process, the Ottoman authorities had to struggle with the educational institutions of the Great Powers, who intended to create areas of influence for themselves in the territories of the empire. As detailed in Chapter 4, the non-Muslim and non-Turkish provinces of the Ottoman Empire were seen by these powers as potential colonies. In this regard, Great Britain, Russia, and France made educational investments in various regions of the empire, starting in Syria, to increase their penetration among these peoples. By the beginning of the war, these foreign educational institutions had reached considerable numbers in Syria and, with the outbreak of the war, the Ottoman Empire confiscated all such institutions belonging to its enemies. The expulsion of the staff of these institutions resulted in closure for most of them. To replace these institutions, new enterprises designed to instill a strong Ottoman identity among the Syrians were organized by Cemal Pasha. As a continuation of Chapter 4, this section will attempt to describe these efforts. On the other hand, as stated elsewhere, Cemal wanted to raise Syria's level of "development" to that of Egypt, which was a model of "development" for the Syrians, and thus to make them feel that their state was as developed as that of Great Britain.

For these reasons, the Syrian provinces experienced an intense push for the Ottomanization of education in Cemal Pasha's era. The education statistics for the beginning of the year 1915 clearly reveal these efforts. A report from the educational director in Jerusalem regarding schooling activities in 1915 gives many details in this regard. At the beginning of the school year, a boarding school for the training of male teachers (*Darülmua'llimin*) went into operation with 29 students in Jerusalem. The director noted that once the school reached full capacity the number of students would rise to 200 boys. In the city centers of Jerusalem and Jaffa, five classrooms (*dershane*) and two preschools (*muallimli iki ana mektebi*) were opened. The director added that these institutions had gained wide popularity among the local population and that the number of students in these schools reached 150 within a short span of time. In addition, 29 primary schools were established in the villages of Jerusalem, Khalil al-Rahman, Gaza, and Jaffa. The total number of students in these schools was from 100 to 150. The previously established primary schools had been disciplined (*intizam*) with the appointment of new teachers. Teachers of the Turkish language were appointed to the three private schools opened by non-Muslims "with the purpose of the dissemination of the usage of the Ottoman language." Their salaries were paid by the governorate of Jerusalem. A model school with 10 classrooms (*Tatbikat Mekteb-i İbtidaisi*), on which construction had started in 1913, was completed. Construction of a primary school was started in the Kobab village annexed to Jerusalem. Finally, the buildings of a primary school for boys in Ramleh and a primary school for girls in Jerusalem had been repaired.⁸⁶

The Selahaddin-i Eyyubi complex in Jerusalem

Cemal Pasha also initiated education activities aimed at training new religious scholars to be able to strengthen the loyalties of the Syrian people toward the caliphate and to promote the Ottoman caliph in the other parts of the Ottoman Empire and in foreign countries. At that time, allegiance to the caliph also meant hostility toward the “enemies of the religion,” that is, the Entente states. To this end, immediately after his arrival in Syria the pasha established a religious university in Jerusalem called Selahaddin-i Eyyubi Külliyesi, for which he confiscated the building of the St. Anna Church, which had been controlled by the French Jesuits before the war.⁸⁷ This was clearly a very symbolic action. The church was built by the Crusaders in the twelfth century during their rule in Jerusalem and now it was being turned into a Muslim religious establishment under the name of the most famous Muslim commander who fought against the Crusades. However, the administration of the church inside the building was handed over to the Greek Catholic Church.⁸⁸ At the beginning of 1915, Cemal commandeered some parts of this building and transformed them into a religious school. However, a small part was left as a church. According to Strohmeier, who wrote a detailed article on the *küllîye*, the naming of the *küllîye* after Selahaddin-i Eyyubi demonstrated that Cemal identified himself with the tradition of Muslim conquerors.⁸⁹

The *küllîye* was opened on 28 January 1915, on the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad (Mevlid Kandili), with a brilliant ceremony in the presence of the commander-in-chief of the Ottoman armies, Enver Pasha, and Cemal Pasha. A large mass of the local population attended the ceremony, as well as prominent *ulama* and bureaucrats from Syria and Palestine. The crowd first went to the Aksa Mosque to pray, and then walked to the *küllîye*. Before the opening ceremony all the Christian symbols in the building had been removed.⁹⁰

The prominent Egyptian pan-Islamist Abd al-Aziz Chavish⁹¹ was appointed as the director of the school. In fact, Cemal Pasha opposed this appointment since Chavish had a reputation for acting independently. Cemal insistently requested that Talat dismiss Chavish, claiming that Chavish was speaking about his independence from Cemal Pasha everywhere (*sağda solda konuşmak*) and that in doing so he was violating Cemal's personal dignity and prestige in Syria.⁹² However, Enver and Talat, most likely taking the pan-Islamist aims of the establishment of the *küllîye* into consideration, supported the appointment of Chavish, stressing that they had made their decision before Cemal expressed his opposition. Talat's telegram to Cemal on the issue was highly apologetic, entreating him to accept Chavish's appointment “kissing your hands.”⁹³ Nevertheless, Chavish would leave the directorate in a short while, most likely due to his disagreements with Cemal Pasha.⁹⁴

The principal aim of the school was to break the influence in the Muslim world of al-Azhar in Egypt and Aligarh College in India, which were under British influence. The scholars who would be trained in this university were to

call for pan-Islamist unity under the leadership of the Ottoman caliph. To this end, the most prominent scholars in Istanbul were sent to Jerusalem to be employed in this school.⁹⁵ On the other hand, as explained on several occasions throughout this study, one aim of Cemal's presence in Syria was to obliterate the psychology of "backwardness" that prevailed among the Syrians, stemming from the idea that Egypt was more developed than Syria as a result of the British protectorate. The *küllîye* would serve this goal, too. It is noteworthy that the idea of the *küllîye* was inspired by the methods of the Christian missionaries.⁹⁶

In addition to celebrated scholars from Istanbul, members of the prominent Arab families and well-known Arabists, some of whom were later punished or exiled by Cemal Pasha, were among the professors in the *küllîye*. The diversity of the teachers employed there also shows the complexity of the late Ottoman Arab society in terms of ideological affiliation. Among them, Ahmad Tabbara had founded the Ittihad-ı Osmani (Union of the Ottomans) club in 1908. Later, he worked actively in the Jamiyyat al-Islahiyya, a decentralist Arabist society. In 1916 he was sentenced to death by Cemal Pasha.⁹⁷ Rustum Haydar, from the prominent Palestinian al-Nashashibi family, was among the founders of the Arabist society al-Fatat in 1911. In 1909, he wrote a Ph.D. dissertation at Sorbonne University praising Mehmed Ali's period of rule in Syria. He worked as the director of the Beirut *Sultani* School. He was appointed to an important office as the *küllîye* course superintendent (*ders nazırı*) and lectured on history and economics there.⁹⁸ The French teacher Subhi Bey al-Hadra was an alumni of the Ottoman Military School (Harbiye). Following a short period of employment at the *küllîye*, he joined the Ottoman forces at the canal and was taken prisoner by the British troops there. Afterwards, he joined the sharif's troops.⁹⁹ Rafiq al-Tamimi was also one of the founders of the al-Fatat Society.¹⁰⁰ In sum, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that the *küllîye* had been established as a result of an alliance between opposition groups and the government against Great Britain in the beginning of the war. However, Cemal's later prosecution of the members of the Arabist parties ended this alliance.

As for the courses taught in the *küllîye*, both religious and modern sciences were included in the curriculum, as well as eastern and western language courses. Among the religious courses, *fiqh*, *tafsir*, *hadith*, *kalam*, the history of religions and *tasavvuf* were some of the most significant. Both Turkish and Arabic were included in the course program. The students were required to register for at least one eastern (Persian, Urdu, Tatar) and one western (German, French, English, Russian) language. They were taught the history of the Arabs, and Ottoman and Turkish history, as well as the political history of the contemporary age (*Asr-ı Hazır Tarih-i Siyasisi*). The notable modern sciences taught in the *küllîye* were geography, economics, law, the natural sciences, and astronomy.¹⁰¹

The *küllîye* was very attractive for the Syrians. In the year 1916, only one quarter of the applicants could be accepted as students. There was a quota of

10 for students who could register to the school from abroad. Entitlements in terms of student numbers were distributed among the countries as such: Egypt – 4; Sudan and Ethiopia – 2; Tripoli and Benghazi – 2; Tunisia – 1; Algeria, Morocco, and South Africa – 1; Java and the Philippines – 3; China – 3; India – 5; Afghanistan – 2; Belucistan – 1; Iran – 2; Turkistan (Bukhara, Hiva, Tashkent, Semerkant) – 5; Caucasus, Astrahan, Kazan, Crimea, and Poland – 6. However, those quotas could not be filled, most likely due to the circumstances of the war, and a majority of the students were from Syria, Anatolia, and Palestine: 30 from Damascus, 25 from Aleppo, 25 from Beirut, and 20 from Jerusalem.¹⁰²

In spite of the political and economic traumas that deeply affected daily life in Palestine, the *küllîye* continued its educational activities until November 1917, one month before the British invasion. After the invasion, it was relocated to Damascus. There is not enough information on the *küllîye* after its relocation.¹⁰³

A similar undertaking was attempted in Medina in the same year. According to the architect of the projected school building, Mehmet Nihat Bey (Nigisberk), the name of the school was to be Medrese-i Külliye and Chavish would be responsible for its administration.¹⁰⁴ The commencement of the sharifian rebellion accelerated the project. In the beginning of the year 1917, the *Evkaf* (charities) Minister İbrahim Bey paid a visit there. The aim of this religious school was to educate young *imams* and preachers who would promote counter-propaganda to weaken the sharif's movement. Although communication problems and the worsening of the military situation caused the project's failure,¹⁰⁵ Mehmet Nihat implied that considerable progress had been made in the construction of the school building.¹⁰⁶

Halide Edib as Cemal Pasha's education supervisor

As explained earlier, the Ottomans were competing with the Europeans, especially France, for the allegiance of the Syrians. As detailed in Chapter 4, with the outbreak of war, Cemal first Ottomanized the French institutions in Syria and then endeavored to reorganize public education in Syria in a way that would enable him to make the Syrian people more loyal to the ideal of Ottoman unity and more "conscious" of the aims of the Great Powers. For these purposes, toward the end of the year 1916, Cemal wanted to regulate mass education in Syria in a more systematic way under the supervision of Halide Edib. The aims of Cemal's project were explained by Halide Edib as follows:

After the extreme measures he had taken to put down the conspiracy in Syria,¹⁰⁷ he was anxious to create a good government and an efficient system of public education. He had seen the strong inclination of the Arabs toward the French, based on the educational efforts of the French, and he was desirous of copying their methods in a less religious and more liberal sense.¹⁰⁸

To this end, he appealed to Halide Edib at the beginning of the year 1916 to come to Syria to be his supervisor for educational issues. He sent a letter with Falih Rifkî stating that:

He had been obliged to close the French schools and monasteries, which used to give education to the Arabs, on political grounds. The schools opened by the department of public instruction were not sufficient. The local governments in Syria, with the aid of the army, had decided to establish a series of schools.¹⁰⁹

After describing the situation, Cemal invited Halide Edib to Syria to organize the school system or to send teachers there for that aim. Halide Edib's sister Nigiar went to Beirut voluntarily and established a primary school there. In the summer of 1916, Cemal sent another letter to Halide asking her to travel to Syria and study the situation to draw up a plan for a larger number of schools in Damascus, Beirut, and Lebanon. This time, Halide Edib accepted his request and traveled to Syria.¹¹⁰

Following her visit, she returned to Istanbul in mid-September 1916. However, Cemal did not stop trying to persuade her. Toward the end of 1916, he again asked Halide Edib to undertake the organization of the schools in Syria. At the very beginning of 1917, she accepted Cemal's offer and left for Syria with some 50 female teachers.¹¹¹ In a letter to Cavid Bey, the Minister of Finance, that she sent a few months later, Halide Edib stated that she loved Syria and the Syrians very much and was working hard to contribute to the development of the region.¹¹²

With the closure of the French institutions, the education of girls had emerged as an urgent issue for Cemal Pasha. After the confiscation of the French schools, there was only one secondary school for girls in all of Syria. Thus, Halide Edib began to work toward the opening of girls' schools. According to the Austrian consul, 45 teachers who came with Halide Edib from İstanbul were sent to different regions in Syria. There these teachers were to work with the Arab teachers. There were seven Turkish and six Arab women teachers in the model girls' school that was established in Damascus immediately after Halide Edib's arrival.¹¹³ Toward the end of 1917, the villa of the late Ziver Pasha (Ziver Paşa Konağı) on Salihiye Street was expropriated to serve as the schoolhouse.¹¹⁴ Cemal Pasha's desire to become the founder of the modern Syria also revealed itself in Halide's educational activities. Interestingly enough, the model school was called Cemal Pasha İnas Mektebi (Cemal Pasha Girls' High School).¹¹⁵

As a result of the intense work of Halide Edib and her retinue, at the beginning of the year 1917, three girls' high schools went into operation in Beirut, Damascus, and Lebanon with the cooperation of the governors of these cities.¹¹⁶ Although Halide Edib did not mention it, a girls' school was also established in Aleppo at this time.¹¹⁷ In addition, a teachers' school and a primary school for girls were established in Beirut. Halide Edib was employed

within the body of the 4th Army and the finance of these schools was provided by the provincial budgets.¹¹⁸ Toward the end of the war, when the governors were unable to meet the provisioning needs of the schools, the army supplied the necessary food for these institutions.¹¹⁹ The entrance exams were held both in Turkish and Arabic. According to Halide Edib, in the new schools the teaching of Arabic was taken very seriously. As for the students of these schools, "Lebanon mostly sent Christians, Beirut sent both Moslems and Christians, while the Damascus students were all Moslems."¹²⁰ According to a report from the Austrian consul, another aim of these new schools was to establish linguistic centralization by teaching the new Arab students the official language of the Ottoman Empire, that is, Turkish.¹²¹ Besides the Arabs, Cemal Pasha also pressed the Turkish officials in Syria to send their daughters to these schools.¹²² However, because of the deteriorating military and provisioning conditions in the Syrian provinces, most of the teachers who had come to Syria with Halide Edib returned to Istanbul in March 1918.¹²³

The aims behind the establishment of these schools are a matter of debate in the existing literature. The following remarks from Halide Edib describing the aims of these schools have been a matter of some discussion:

Arabic nationalism so far had been in Syria a political instrument in foreign hands. Nationalism used for political purposes is an ideal turned into a monstrosity. Turkey must help the Arabs to develop a national spirit and personality, teach them to love their own national culture more than any foreign one; and when the time came for the Arab to have his independence, he would geographically and economically see that he had more common ties and interests with the Turks than with the foreigners.¹²⁴

According to Makdisi's interpretation of these remarks:

Her goal was to open and run several Ottoman schools to educate Arab women, to teach them Turkish, and most important to ensure their loyalty to the Ottoman state. Despite her own best efforts to encourage a more empathetic view of the Arabs, her understanding of her own mission was startlingly revealing of the imperial dimension of Ottoman modernity: she considered Arabs a "minority" who had to be taught to love their Turkish government and who, after a suitable period of education and uplift, would be allowed self-determination. "Turkey" she wrote, "must help the Arabs to develop a national spirit and personality, teach them to love her own national culture more than any foreign one [by which she meant the French]."¹²⁵

When Edib's remarks are taken at face value, Makdisi's interpretation seems fair. However, like Cemal Pasha, Halide Edib also sees a division between nationalist Arabs and non-nationalist Arabs. In her view, the nationalist

Arabs were “a political instrument in foreign hands,” and therefore could not be trusted. She implicitly accepts the “development” of the nationalist Arabs and puts them in a higher category. Like many of the Young Turks, Halide believed if these nationalist Arabs were to teach ordinary Arabs about their “Arabness,” they would become sympathetic to the foreign powers, instead of their own state. Therefore, it was the “enlightened” or Unionist Turks who had to teach “Arabness” to the Arabs. As for “self-determination,” it is almost impossible to claim that Halide Edib conceived of “self-determination” for the Arabs during the Ottoman period given her mission in Syria. It would have been an irreconcilable contradiction to strive for the enhancement of a sense of Ottomanness among the Syrians while preparing them for independence. If we accept this analysis, Halide’s appreciation of Cemal’s persecution of the decentralists would be meaningless. If Makdisi’s account were correct, Cemal should have cooperated with the Arabists instead of punishing them. Presumably, he is referring to the time when the memoirs were written. But by “time for independence” for the Arabs, Edib meant a date in future when the Arabs would be liberated from the French mandate. A comparison with the Turkish version makes this argument even stronger.¹²⁶

As emphasized several times throughout the present study, Cemal intended to make the Syrians into loyal Ottomans, taking the European nation-state as a model. Therefore, his educational activities cannot be understood apart from this general aim. Makdisi is right that Cemal aimed to replace the French sympathy with that of the Ottomans. But the difference between the two states is ignored by Makdisi. While the Ottomans were the legal authority who had the right to rule Syria, France was a foreign power. Cemal demanded that the Syrians sympathize with their own state instead of a foreign one. On the other hand, the emphasis he placed on teaching Turkish was connected with his general policy in Syria. Following the elimination of local intermediaries described in the previous chapters, Turkish was established as the official language that would facilitate communication between the state and its citizens.

Other educational undertakings for the modernization of Syria

In addition to the efforts outlined above, Ranzi points out that Cemal opened agricultural, industrial, and commercial schools to promote the improvement of the country and to break its dependency on the Great Powers.¹²⁷ Toward the end of the year 1916, Cemal established a school of agriculture in Tanail (in the Bekaa district of the province of Damascus) under the supervision of German experts. The land for the school had been confiscated from the Jesuits at the start of the war. Before the war, the Jesuits had a boarding school and a wine garden there. In these lands, which amounted to 5,000 decares, Cemal established a school with a model farm to enable the students to practice their skills. The students of the school came from every part of Syria. Similarly, he established a technical and industrial school in Damascus

under the leadership of the German expert Profesoor Stöckle.¹²⁸ This school was to concentrate on engineering, road construction, and applied arts. The teaching of the German language was made compulsory in these two schools, and the lectures were partly delivered in German. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, the resistance of the Turkish authorities against the German language was outweighed by the need to employ foreign experts.¹²⁹ In addition, according to Von Kiesling, a German expert employed by Cemal Pasha, the students in this technical school were taught traditional Arab handicrafts, such as faience painting, plaster window manufacturing, and tissue knotting. In this way, the traditional arts were to be preserved as well.¹³⁰ Similarly, according to the Spanish consul, Cemal was planning to found a school of art and trade in Birüssebi, "having contracted specialized professors, trusting the direction of the school to the Military Administration of the Desert ... Courses in Turkish, Arabic, music, drawing and other subjects will be imparted there."¹³¹ According to the *al-Sharq* newspaper in November 1917 a kindergarten was founded in Beirut for children between the ages of 4 and 7. This famed German institution, according to the newspaper, was "to develop the human's mind [*aql*], body [*cism*], and self [*nafs*]." If every parent sent their children to such schools in the east, then real development would emerge among the Muslims, the paper suggested.¹³²

Cemal's endeavors to Ottomanize religious and non-religious education were also appreciated by the Germans. The replacement of foreign domination in the education of the Arab population with that of the Ottomans would also give a free hand to Cemal Pasha to solve the Arab question. After explaining the necessity of opening a university in Medina to eliminate foreign influence there, the German academic Franz Stuhlmann explained the importance of spreading Ottoman schools in these terms in his study:

This foundation should be followed by similar foundations in Baghdad, Damascus, and the Yemen, which should not only disseminate purely Islamic knowledge, but also strive to make western learning subvert their purposes. In this way it will be possible to form an educated element in the country from which efficient officials, doctors, etc. can be recruited, and, as soon as education has penetrated into these lands, they will be able under the Turkish Crescent to form autonomous states, a confederation of states, and so bring about a happy solution of the difficult Arabian question. A strong Turkey can afford to make concessions in the Arabian question.¹³³

Toward the end of his governorate in Syria, Cemal reached an agreement with the Austrian Orient Mission to have young Syrian boys educated in Austria.¹³⁴ According to this agreement, these students must have completed the first five years of their educations in public schools in Syria. This means the age range of the students would have been between 12 and 15. The maximum age for the students was set at 15 years. The mission would provide

scholarships to cover the students' living expenses in Austria. The students would first stay in a boarding house in lower Austria, dividing them into smaller groups of 12 children. A professor whose only job was to take care of these children would be assigned to each group. In the first year, the students would be placed in preparatory classes to learn the German language. After that they would proceed to their regular coursework.¹³⁵

At the end of their second year, the students would be placed in the appropriate professional or industrial schools. There they would be able to learn professions such as factory director, machine engineer, electrician, textile or metal engineer. The students would also be able to register in schools of commerce or schools of agriculture to learn agriculture, forestry, etc. After the completion of their professional education, they would be able to continue their education in other faculties such as medicine, veterinary medicine, and law.¹³⁶

The secretary of the Orient Mission paid a visit to the Syrian provinces to register students for this project. The secretary visited Aleppo, Damascus, Beirut, Haifa, and Jerusalem. All the applicants were children of prominent families in these provinces. During the visits, Cemal Pasha and the other officials did everything in their power to facilitate the work of the mission.¹³⁷ The interest of the local population was considerable. From 200 applicants, the first 15 were selected according to the rating they received from the evaluation committee. Before them, a group of Christian orphans was sent to Austria for education. There were also children and relatives of prominent bureaucrats among the students who received scholarships: the nephew of the governor of Syria, the son of the commander of the 8th Army Corps, and the sons of judges and other prominent bureaucrats as well as the sons of notables of Syria. Contrary to the original agreement, the students were older than 15, since the younger ones would have had problems adapting to the new conditions of a foreign country.¹³⁸ For Austria it was a golden opportunity to increase its influence in Syria. In Cemal Pasha's words, these students would pioneer the elimination of foreign dependency in the Syrian lands.¹³⁹

Another remarkable project undertaken by Cemal Pasha in the field of education was the establishment of an oriental library in Damascus. A report presented to him in French in May 1917 summarized the aims of the establishment of this library.¹⁴⁰ With this library, Cemal aimed first of all at creating "an institution from which every enlightened man could draw intellectual nourishment he cannot find elsewhere."¹⁴¹ Secondly, the riches of the East, which were spoiled by the West for centuries, had to be kept in their rightful place. Therefore, this library would protect old manuscripts from being moved to Western countries. By gathering together these valuable books, Eastern academics would no longer have to visit Western countries to study their cultures and languages. Consequently, the East would regain its former glory and riches, and would once again become "the center of attraction for those who wanted to study and know thoroughly."¹⁴² Damascus was determined as the site of the library since this city was less influenced by

European culture and, in the ancient times, was a center of libraries and scholarship. This right should be left to Damascus to continue to be, as in the past, the source of Eastern spiritual life. Moreover, young men should know about the wealth of ancient and modern Turkish literature. In addition, the library was to provide Turkish books for schoolchildren who were being taught Turkish in school. In doing so, it would perform a great patriotic service and complement the educational policies that had begun at school. As a result of this project, the city of Damascus would regain the fame it once had as "the Paradise of the Orient."¹⁴³ The report summarized the proposed library project as follows:

The library must contain: 1. the most significant works of Arab and Muslim literature in all their branches, 2. language works (grammars, dictionaries, language studies, etc.) and classics of Semitic languages, 3. great books about the East in general (languages?, religions, history, customs, arts, geography, travel and more) and Arabic and Islamic literature in particular, in all their different languages, 4. a rich collection of ancient and modern Turkish literature, as well as new publications (books, journals, periodicals, etc.) in this language, 5. great books about Turkey in all languages.¹⁴⁴

For this purpose, Cemal assigned the prominent Zionist and Orientalist Dr. Jehlin to prepare a catalog of the Islamic Library in Damascus. During this process, Dr. Jehlin identified large numbers of unknown manuscripts.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the project could not be put into practice, most likely because of the difficulties arising from the war. However, the project is crucial in terms of indicating Cemal's desire to make the Ottoman realm intellectually independent of the West, and in terms of its appreciation of the importance of knowledge for achieving independence. Secondly, the emphasis on the necessity of preserving ancient Arab intellectual culture and the references to the glories of ancient times, in other words the glories of the history of the Arabs, make it hard to identify Cemal Pasha as a Turkifier in Syria.

All in all, throughout his governorate in Syria, Cemal Pasha strove through his education policy to make the Syrians proper and loyal citizens of the empire. In sum, his undertakings in the field of both religious and public education aimed at the replacement of foreign education institutions with their Ottoman equivalents and the identification of these new citizens with the ideals of Ottomanism. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, the aim of Cemal Pasha's educational reforms was to create an alternative center for the Arab world in Syria to compete with al-Azhar in Egypt. In this way, Cemal tried to make Muslim students stop traveling to Egypt for their education. Another aim of these reforms was to raise Syrian awareness of their government's progressive nature. Cemal also opened the agricultural and

commercial schools to reduce the region's dependency on foreign sources for modern development.¹⁴⁶

Loyalty in return for development: public works under Cemal Pasha in Syria

In addition to his attempts to mold the bodies and minds of the Syrians into those of ideal citizens of the Ottoman Empire, Cemal also made considerable alterations in the urban space of Syrian cities to convert them into a convenient structure for the "surveillance" of the state over its citizens, as well as to develop the Syrian lands economically. "His background and the positions he had held before the war particularly predisposed him to engage in such a comprehensive venture."¹⁴⁷ As will be analyzed below, these activities aimed both at saving Syria from foreign dependency and at increasing the influence of the Ottoman government in the Syrian provinces by giving them a modern and penetrable shape in the Foucauldian sense.

Modernizing Syrian cities

With the appointment of Cemal Pasha as governor general, an outstanding improvement emerged in the appearance of the Syrian provinces. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, in a report on 23 May 1915, many of the narrower streets there had been systematically enlarged in a short period of time. In addition, some streets were repaired and redecorated. All this was done at a very small cost, presumably due to the use of labor battalions in these works.¹⁴⁸ As an engineer, Hulusi Bey, the first governor of Syria under Cemal's Rule, made a special contribution to the enlargement and modernization of the streets of Syrian cities. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, due to his contribution to these public works, when Hulusi was dismissed at his own request, "all the circles of the civil service and people agreed that he was the best general governor that was appointed in Syria for many years. His dismissal caused a sincere sorrow among the Syrian people."¹⁴⁹ In addition to increasing the government's control over Syrian cities with these construction works, Cemal aimed at winning the sympathy of the Syrians for the Ottoman Empire.¹⁵⁰ According to the Austrian consul, with these works Cemal wanted to make Syria as developed as Egypt in the eyes of the Syrians.¹⁵¹

Throughout the year 1915, besides enlarging the old streets of Damascus, Cemal Pasha also opened a new great boulevard called Cemal Pasha Boulevard in the center of the city to provide a modern appearance there, in addition to building a public garden, again given his own name.¹⁵² Some houses, shops, and warehouses were expropriated and demolished to provide passage through dead-end streets. A commission was established to confiscate and pull down these buildings, purchasing them from their owners at a value defined by the commission. The owners took a payment record (*mazbata*) from the

governorate for the payment of the price of their properties.¹⁵³ In the same year, Cemal constructed a boulevard in Jaffa that was 800 meters in length and 35 meters in width.¹⁵⁴ Cemal reported to Enver that Birüssebi had been transformed into a town with the new buildings¹⁵⁵ that had been built by Abdulhamid II as an entirely modern city to control the Bedouins in the region. The name of the main park in the city was changed to Cemal Pasha Parkı after the pasha's arrival in Syria.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, to set his own seal on Syria, Cemal ordered troops who built fountains in preparation for the conquest of Egypt to write on their inscription tablets: "Voyager! It is Cemal Pasha the great and pious who built this fountain with the help of Allah to quench your thirst."¹⁵⁷ With these ventures, he hoped to be known as the founder of modern Syria, similar to what would later become the legacy of Mustafa Kemal in Turkey.

However, during the construction works some problems arose between the government and the owners of expropriated buildings. The values of these properties determined by the commission were far lower than their real worth and the payments were made with significant delay, sometimes reaching one year. Because of the devaluation of paper money, the owners had to sell off their payment records at the underrated value of 20, 50, or even 55 percent. Given the potential income from renting out these buildings, according to a report from the German Palestinian Bank in Beirut in 1915, these economic losses could not easily be recovered.¹⁵⁸ In September 1916, Talat had to warn Azmi Bey, the governor of Beirut, to obey the regulations of the constitution while conducting the expropriations and to pay the price of the properties in advance.¹⁵⁹ Similarly, in October 1917, the inspection reports stated that "the governor of Beirut, Azmi Bey, engaged in much theft and destruction in defiance of the law of expropriation to construct streets." According to these reports, Talat had to issue a warning to Azmi Bey and repeated his earlier warning about obeying the law during the expropriations.¹⁶⁰

The situation was no different in the other cities.¹⁶¹ In Damascus, during works to widen the existing roads in 1917, three buildings belonging to a Damascene property owner were treated as one building and the owner was paid accordingly by the provincial council (*vilayet meclisi*). However, upon the petition of the property owner,¹⁶² this judgment was reversed by the Council of State (*Şura-yı Devlet*) and each building was valued separately.¹⁶³ Similar cases occurred in Aleppo, too. There, the state officials and urban notables founded a company called Terakkiyat-ı Nafia-yı Umranîye (Development of Civilizing Public Works) to expropriate properties for the development of the city in return for payment receipts. It is clearly understood from a telegram by the governor of Aleppo that the property owners requested assistance from the central government in Istanbul to help them deal with these activities.¹⁶⁴ In relation to this, economic life in the town was considerably damaged during this process. The expropriations also contributed to an increase in shop rents. As a result, a series of small merchants had to clear

out their shops and transfer their goods to their houses, resulting in unacceptable economic damages.¹⁶⁵

In the beginning of the year 1916, the process of the modernization of the Syrian cities reached a more systematic form with the employment by Cemal Pasha of foreign academics specializing in restoration and architecture. He first selected the Swiss academic Maximilian Zürcher, the old director of the German Fine Arts Academy in Rome, as the general director of public works (*İnşaat Umum Müdürü*) for Cemal's Army.¹⁶⁶ Zürcher was tasked with preparing elaborate plans to construct and renew the principal Syrian provinces "with an emphasis on imparting a sense of grandeur to the Ottoman precinct of Damascus."¹⁶⁷

Within the framework of his plan, a new boulevard was constructed in the Western suburb (*vorstadt*) of Damascus and was named Cemal Pasha Boulevard. By pulling down the older buildings around the boulevard, an 800-meter-long promenade was created on both sides of the boulevard, 20 meters in width on both sides, decorated with vegetation and water basins.¹⁶⁸ The Hijaz Railroad station was located at the west end of the boulevard. Cemal asked the German architect Wulzinger to prepare a detailed design based on a sketch conceived by the Pasha for the square in front of the station: a fabulous fountain centerpiece "which should be complete with cascades and lions, one with a paw resting on a Turkish flag." Poor Wulzinger produced a design that failed to provide these essential details and the project was never realized.¹⁶⁹

In April 1916, in Jerusalem, the highway between Ramla and Jerusalem was excellently restored. The edge of town was given a new Cemal Pasha Avenue and the town squares were cleared of obstructing structures, although, according to the Spanish consul, some arbitrary acts were committed in the course of these improvements.¹⁷⁰ In the beginning of July, Cemal mentioned to Ballobar, the Spanish consul, that he was planning to build a park on Mount Zion, tearing down the houses there, and to make an avenue from the Franciscan School to the Damascus Gate.¹⁷¹

Besides these works to enhance the penetrability of the cities, Cemal also worked toward the development of the countryside. He stated in one of his reports to Enver that his construction activities in the Sinai Desert were also not done out of military considerations, but that they had been carried out for the sake of public improvements in those regions and these aims had been achieved.¹⁷² In the same vein, toward the end of the year 1916, he launched a ferry across the Dead Sea, which facilitated grain traffic from the agricultural areas to the east of the Dead Sea.¹⁷³ The ships were carrying 100–150 tons of goods and foodstuffs daily from the east shore to the west.¹⁷⁴ The biggest ship on the Dead Sea was called *Büyük Cemal* (Cemal the Great). In January 1917, Cemal tasked a German officer with researching ways in which the potential of the Dead Sea for transportation could be improved. He proposed the use of small boats in a more effective way and the construction of convenient seaports, which would make larger ship transportation more efficient.

These boats would be manufactured partly in Jaffa, Alexandretta, Haifa, and Djerablus, and partly in Jideida and Jerusalem. According to the remarks of this officer, with the improvement of ship transportation on the Dead Sea, the travel time between the southeast end of the Dead Sea and its north would be shortened to 3.5 hours.¹⁷⁵ Apart from this, Cemal also attempted to improve agriculture in the region. In February 1917, he requested hydraulic engineers from the German Foreign Ministry to construct water channels to increase agricultural productivity in the Jordan Valley and the fruitful plains of Bekaa.¹⁷⁶

Restoration of historical monuments

Another noteworthy activity conducted by Cemal was the restoration of monuments. Toward the end of the year 1916, he launched an initiative for the restoration of monuments in Syria from the Byzantine, Islamic, and Turkish (pre-Ottoman and Ottoman) periods. According to Wiegand, with these efforts Cemal hoped to awaken an understanding of the past among the population.¹⁷⁷ To this end, he assigned Theodor Wiegand, a German officer and an expert on monuments, as the head of the Command for Monument Protection (Denkmaelschutzkommando), which was created to unearth, protect, and restore Syria's historical monuments.¹⁷⁸ The aims of the undertaking were described by Cemal Pasha as follows:

1. The creation of a reliable inspection agency for the preservation of monuments;
2. The removal of new buildings inside and around old buildings, the cleaning of ruins, and the prohibition of using ruins as building materials;
3. The improvement of access roads to ruin sites and the creation of suitable accommodation to facilitate visits by domestic and foreign [tourists].¹⁷⁹

Wiegand carried out a project with his team to inventory the monuments of Syria. They prepared two albums. The first was published in Berlin with the support of Cemal Pasha and funding from the army.¹⁸⁰ In addition, in 1920, another publication was released, this one regarding the activities of this command, in Berlin and Leipzig with a foreword by Von Kress.¹⁸¹ These books not only include information about Syrian monuments, but also give details about the geography of the region, the structure of its valleys and mountains, etc. The first inventory book can be seen as an attempt by Cemal Pasha to increase the "legibility" of these lands that he was ruling, most likely to penetrate them in a more sophisticated way, and to prevent the illegal trafficking of such monuments to Europe.¹⁸²

In addition to these inventory efforts, the Command for Monument Protection restored monuments from the Byzantine, Arabic, and Turkish periods. The intervention of Zürcher and Wiegand's team saved the ruins from Byzantine times from total destruction.¹⁸³ Similarly, Cemal Pasha's measures

forestalled the decay of the lodge (*Tekke*) and mosque of Sinanie, which is an example of the harmony of Arab and Turkish ideas of art.¹⁸⁴ The Selimiye Mosque in Damascus, one of the most outstanding examples of Ottoman architecture, also mixed with the Arab style, was too restored on the initiative of Cemal Pasha.¹⁸⁵ These two buildings were restored by the Turkish architect Mehmet Nihad Bey.¹⁸⁶ The *Vakıf* Ministry sent money for the restoration of the Selimiye Mosque and Süleymaniye Almshouse (*imarethane*).¹⁸⁷ Upon a request from Hüseyin Vassaf to the "second conqueror of Egypt," Cemal "restored, decorated, and furnished" the tomb of Muhyiddin al-Arabi, one of the most prominent figures in Sufi history. The tomb was built by the first conqueror of Egypt, Selim II.¹⁸⁸

During the war, the French newspaper *Journal de Genève* attacked Cemal for abandoning the monuments of the Islamic-Arab period to ruin.¹⁸⁹ However, according to Von Kiesling, who wrote a book on the restoration activities conducted in Syria during the war, "it is a pity [to suggest] that the influence of Cemal Pasha did not reach that Islamic example of architecture, which belonged to the pre-Turkish period." He adds that previously no one had attended to the damaged roofs and walls of the monuments from the pre-Turkish Islamic period. Similarly, if Cemal had not intervened to protect these buildings, the tile decorations on their inner walls would have been sold by antique merchants for tremendous prices.¹⁹⁰ It is understood from an Ottoman document that Cemal Pasha confiscated the buildings around the Umayyad Mosque and the Aziziye Mosque. The *Vakıf* Ministry sent 100,000 qurush for the restoration to Cemal.¹⁹¹ This was most likely for cleaning the surroundings of these historical buildings.

Cemal Pasha's projects regarding the transformation of the structure of Syria's cities and the restoration of its monuments also indicate that he did not see these as separate endeavors. Rather he strove to increase the presence of the state in Syria in relation to all of its buildings. He summarizes his plans in this sense as follows:

[In] Jerusalem: 1. Clearing the walls of the *Aqsa* Mosque of some out-buildings that spoil its old magnificence and removing the whitewash covering the perfect stone walls [of the mosque]; 2. Repairing the citadel of Jerusalem [Tower of David]¹⁹² preserving its authenticity [*aslına uygun olarak*] to transform it into a local museum; 3. Construction of a government building and a small palace near the citadel, and building a terrace adjacent to the citadel; 4. Removing the big puddle [*burka*] in Jerusalem that is polluting the air of the town and transforming the site into a perfect market hall; 5. Returning the squares and drains to their authentic states.

[In] Damascus: 1. The protection of the citadel of Damascus¹⁹³ from ruin and the transformation of its inner square into a promenade, the reconstruction of its external drains; 2. The extension of the boulevard constructed on my order ... to the *Circa* meadowland and the construction of a public garden.¹⁹⁴

He also had detailed plans prepared for the buildings he intended to construct on this boulevard, such as a public bathhouse (*hamam*), a hotel, governmental buildings such as a courthouse, post and telegraph office, and municipal building. Finally, he also planned the construction of fountains, waterfalls, and terraces in the park.¹⁹⁵

[In] Beirut: 1. Perfect stairs to come up directly from the Beirut port to the government office; 2. A palace constructed in *Re's-i Beyrut*; 3. Post and Telegraph Office.

[In] Aleppo: 1. A perfect project to save the citadel¹⁹⁶ from ruin and the restoration of some parts of it; 2. [The Construction of] a government office in Aleppo; 3 [And] a Post and Telegraph Office.¹⁹⁷

It can be inferred from these projects that one of Cemal Pasha's most important goals in Syria was to enhance the sense of the presence of the state's authority among the Syrian citizens of the empire by increasing the visibility of the government in urban spaces. On the other hand, looking at his restoration plans and activities, it can be concluded that Cemal Pasha also hoped to make the historical legacy of the region visible in the cities belonging to the Byzantine, Islamic-Arab, and Ottoman periods, which can be seen as essential components of the identities of the Syrian peoples.

The Austrian consul in Damascus interpreted the aims of Cemal Pasha's public works and restorations in the Syrian cities as an attempt to elevate these lands to the level of Egypt. He tried to demonstrate to the Syrians that their government was as capable as that of Great Britain in terms of development and that the Ottoman government could achieve in Syria what Great Britain had done in Egypt. However, the consul added, since Cemal's program of construction was halted, a deep division had emerged between the newly constructed parts of the cities and the old ones.¹⁹⁸

Cemal's projects for the structural embellishment of the Syrian cities and the restoration of their old buildings required huge funds and extensive demolition of the buildings. Ali Fuad Erden, his chief of general staff, argued that such efforts could only be made in times of peace, not during war, and that they did not make any contribution to the defense of the country.¹⁹⁹ Similarly, a German officer under Cemal's command thought it was his duty to report his commander's waste of funds on public works under Zürcher's supervision in the middle of the war.²⁰⁰ In addition, as explained above, the owners of the demolished buildings resented Cemal. As a result, all these projects created dissatisfaction among his bureaucrats and property owners, rather than gaining sympathy.²⁰¹

Notes

- 1 Focusing only on the Armenian policy of the CUP, Taner Akçam claimed in his last book that they pursued the Turkification of the Ottoman lands: Taner Akçam,

The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012. Fuat Dündar essentially claimed the same thing from a broader perspective: Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*.

- 2 By this word, I mean the transformation of the cities in a way that would enable the state to engage in the "surveillance" of the cities' residents. According to Michel Foucault, with the transformation of dead-end streets into the boulevards and avenues, the authority of the state over the cities and its residents was strengthened. In this way, they would feel the presence of the state more closely. For further detail, see: Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, London: Penguin Books, 1991.
- 3 Hasan Kayalı, "Wartime Regional and Imperial Integration of Greater Syria during World War I," in Thomas Philipp and Birgit Schaebler (eds.), *The Syrian Land: Processes of Integration and Fragmentation: Bilad al-Sham from the 18th to the 20th Century*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998, pp. 295–306.
- 4 Nuri Conker, *Zabit ve Kumandan*, İstanbul, 1913, quoted in Gültekin Yıldız, *Neferin Adı Yok: Zorunlu Askerliğe Geçiş Sürecinde Osmanlı Devleti'nde Siyaset, Ordu ve Toplum (1826–1839)*, İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2009, p. 307.
- 5 For some studies on the compulsory military service in the Ottoman Empire, see: Yıldız, *Neferin Adı Yok*; Tobias Heinzelmann, *Cihaddan Vatan Savunmasına: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Genel Askerlik Yükümlülüğü, 1826–1856*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınları, 2009.
- 6 In a note written in Arabic by the drafting office in Jaffa before the beginning of the war on 25 April 1914, the following instructions were given to the *muhatars* of the villages on how to draft soldiers:

You must open [the envelope with the names of the soldiers] and stick it to the wall of the mosque, showing joy and happiness, not despair and neglect. The soldiers should not wait, and you [the *mukhtars*] should tell them to bring five days of food with them.

Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, p. 29.

- 7 Darwaza, *Mudhakkiratu*, pp. 216–217. Describing the recruitment process in similar terms, the Austrian consul reports that the age range of the conscription was between 20 and 45 and gives the deadline as eight days: **HHStA**, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 10 August 1914; in his later reports the Austrian consul reported that men over 40 years of age were given discharge papers: **HHStA**, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 3 September 1914. The American consular agent in Haifa also reported the age range as 20–45: **USNA**, RG 59, 867.00/714, Struve to the consul-general in Beirut, 27 August 1914. The governor of Jerusalem also sent a cable to Talat to inform him that he had announced the mobilization order in the city center and all its administrative appendages (*mülhakat*), and that all those liable to conscription, as well as pack animals, were summoned in rapid succession: **BOA**, DH-İ.UM.EK.71/93, Macid to Talat, 29 Temmuz 1330 (11 August 1914).
- 8 **HHStA**, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 10 August 1914; **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 868/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Töhmeh to Defrance, Cairo, 7 April 1915.
- 9 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, p. 45.
- 10 As a matter of fact, they rejected the demands of the government in this direction in the beginning of the war: **HHStA**, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 18 August 1914.
- 11 **BOA**, DH.SYS 123–08/13, Ministry of Interior to Ministry of War, 19 Ağustos 1330 (1 September 1914).
- 12 Darwaza, *Mudhakkiratu*, p. 217. Some people in Beirut fled to the mountains even in the beginning of the conscription to avoid being recruited: **MAEE**, Guerre,

- 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Picot to Delcasse, Beirut, 7 October 1914.
- 13 BOA, DH.EUM.MTK 54/26, Talat to governorates, 6 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (18 October 1914).
- 14 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 15 September 1915, pp. 134–135.
- 15 HHStA, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 18 August 1914.
- 16 Darwaza, *Mudhakkiratu*, pp. 216–218.
- 17 HHStA, PA 12/462, Nedwed to Berchtold, Beirut, 1 October 1914.
- 18 When the Ottoman government declared its entrance into the war, this fear was at the foremost. Therefore, the commander of the 4th Army, Zeki Pasha, had to announce that “all the Ottoman subjects of all creeds Moslem or Christian, are to be quiet and can set their minds at ease”: USNA, RG 59, 867.00/724, the American consul-general of Syria to the Secretary of State, Beirut, 16 November 1914.
- 19 MAEE, Guerre 1914–1918, 867/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Deffrance to Delcasse, Cairo, 16 October 1914. Similar remarks are repeated in the memoirs of al-Hakim for Beirut and Lebanon. For details, see: al-Hakim, *Bayrut wa Lubnan*, pp. 131–133. According to American consul in Beirut, the people in Latakia were afraid of being massacred by “totally uncivilized” Nusayris, who “would like nothing better than an opportunity to attack and loot Latakia and massacre its non-Muslim inhabitants.” USNA, RG 59, 867.00/705, the American consul-general of Syria to the Secretary of State, Beirut, 8 October 1914.
- 20 USNA, RG 59, 867.00/724, the American consul-general of Syria to the Secretary of State, Beirut, 16 November 1914.
- 21 USNA, RG 59, 867.00/717, the American consul-general of Syria to the Secretary of State, Beirut, 2 November 1914.
- 22 Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, p. 7.
- 23 Aaronsohn, *ibid.*, p. 13.
- 24 USNA, RG 59, 867.00/717, the American consul-general of Syria to the Secretary of State, Beirut, 2 November 1914.
- 25 TNA, FO 141/802, Clayton to Grey, Cairo, 18 October 1914.
- 26 TNA, FO 141/802, Clayton to Grey, Cairo, 18 October 1914.
- 27 TNA, FO 141/802, Clayton to Grey, Cairo, 18 October 1914.
- 28 Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, p. 39.
- 29 Even the German soldiers, who did not understand Arabic, were influenced by these orations: Von Kressenstein, *Mit den Türken*, p. 88.
- 30 TNA, FO 371/2781, Sykes to WO, London, 25 September 1916; Aaronsohn described the opinions of the persuaded common soldiers in these terms::

The ideas of the common soldiers on this subject were amusing. Some of them declared that the Canal was to be filled up by the sandbags which had been prepared in great quantities. Others held that thousands of camels would be kept without water for many days preceding the attack; then the thirsty animals, when released, would rush into the Canal in such numbers that the troops could march to victory over the packed masses of drowned bodies.

Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, pp. 38–39.

- 31 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 28 April 1915, p. 113.
- 32 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Stotzingen to AA, 17 November 1916. The number of Muslims in these battalions was very small. Ihsan Turjman gave the number at 20 men in his memoirs: Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 22 April 1915, p. 106.
- 33 Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, pp. 23–24.
- 34 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khalil_al-Sakakini.
- 35 Khalil Sakakini, *Yawmiyatu Khalil Sakakini*, 28 March 1915, pp. 158–59; for the English translation, see: Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, p. 45.

- 36 Tamari, *ibid.*, 9 April 1915, p. 97.
- 37 TNA, FO 14/802, Clayton to Grey, Cairo, 18 October 1914.
- 38 Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, p. 23.
- 39 Aaronsohn, *ibid.*, pp. 44–45.
- 40 Adel Manna, “Between Jerusalem and Damascus: The End of Ottoman Rule as Seen by a Palestinian Modernist,” in *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol. 22–23, 2005, p. 117.
- 41 TNA, FO 371/2781, Sykes to WO, London, 25 September 1916; Aaronsohn states that after the first expedition against the canal “hundreds of the soldiers were straggling in disorder, many of them on leave but many deserting. Soon after the defeat at the canal several thousand soldiers deserted.” Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, p. 47.
- 42 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, pp. 32, 46.
- 43 Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, p. 45.
- 44 TNA, FO 141/801, Storrs to FO, Cairo, 7 January 1915. In some cases, the Turkish officers were even dying from over-consumption of alcohol; SHD, GR 7 N 2136, Saint-Quentin to MG, Cairo, 15 August 1916.
- 45 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 25 April 1915, pp. 109–110.
- 46 Tamari, *ibid.*, 27 April 1915, p. 112.
- 47 Ihsan Turjman described the situation of the soldiers as follows: “What is a soldier supposed to do? The army pays each soldier 85 piasters a month and expects him to survive on it. Even then, most soldiers have not been paid one matleek [*metelik*] since the General Call [November 1914].” Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 30 March 1915, p. 94.
- 48 Tamari, *ibid.*, 13 April 1915, p. 98.
- 49 Tamari, *ibid.*, 14 April 1915, p. 99.
- 50 Turjman suggests that “Soldiery is nothing but a school for debasement and slavishness.” Tamari, *ibid.*, 29 April 1915, p. 114.
- 51 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Stotzingen to AA, 17 November 1916; some other cases of desertions had occurred because of the Turkish officers’ mistreatment of the Arab soldiers. In the beginning of 1915, some 150 of the soldiers assigned for the protection of the Tarsus coast left their places of duty for this reason: BOA, DH.ŞFR 459/35, Hulusi to Talat, Damascus, 13 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (26 January 1915).
- 52 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Stotzingen to AA, 17 November 1916.
- 53 TNA, FO 371/2781, Sykes to WO, London, 25 September 1916; Erden, however, notes that these Arab officers did not take any action against the government throughout the war. Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, pp. 63–65.
- 54 Halide Edib, *Memoirs*, p. 398.
- 55 Halide Edib, *ibid.*, p. 411. The Turkish translation of the passage is somewhat different than the English version. The writer subtracted the sentence beginning with “They would rather be shot ...” from the text. See: Adivar, Halide Edib, *Mor Salkımlı Ev*, İstanbul: Özgür Yayınları, 2000, p. 238.
- 56 PA-AA, Türkei 165, Bd. 40, Neufeld to Wesendock, Berlin, 23 December 1916.
- 57 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 21 September 1915, p. 136.

Approximately after a year, the same soldier, Ihsan Turjman, was praying for death, although he had a desk-job in the Commissariat at Jerusalem: “They say that July is the best month of the year, since it witnessed the liberation of nations. For me it has been the ugliest and vilest of months. I have not seen more difficult days in my life. I have thought often of taking my life. I even have begun praying to God to take me away from this world, so that I will be freed from the miserable life of soldiering.”

Tamari, *ibid.*, 17 August 1916, p. 156.

- 58 PA-AA, Türkei 165, Bd. 40, Neufeld to Wesendock, Berlin, 23 December 1916.

- 59 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, 26 June 1918.
- 60 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 10 September 1915.
- 61 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 18 September 1915.
- 62 According to a cable from the governor of Sivas, their number was 621. For details, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 496/23, the governor of Sivas to Talat, Sivas, 22 Teşrin-i Evvel 1331 (5 November 1915).
- 63 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 534/74, Tahsin to Talat, Deraa, 24 Eylül 1332 (7 October 1916).
- 64 **BOA**, DH-İ.U.M.EK 34/13, the *kaymakam* of Cizre to Talat, 28 Mayıs 1333 (28 May 1917).
- 65 **BOA**, DH.EUM 6.Şb 28/68, Ministry of War to Ministry of Interior, 4 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (4 November 1917).
- 66 **BOA**, DH.EUM 6.Şb 28/68, the governor of Beirut to Ministry of Interior, Beirut, 9 Şubat 1333 (9 February 1917).
- 67 **BOA**, DH.EUM 6.Şb 17/28, the governor of Zor to Ministry of Interior, 2 Temmuz 1333 (2 July 1917).
- 68 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 595/38, the *defterdar* (provincial treasurer) of Syria to Talat, Damascus, 10 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (23 November 1916).
- 69 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 536/112, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 25 Teşrin-i Evvel 1332 (7 October 1916).
- 70 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 536/30, Tahsin to Talat, Humus, 16 Teşrin-i Evvel 1332 (29 October 1916).
- 71 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 538/3, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 8 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (21 November 1916).
- 72 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 585/105, Tahsin to Ministry of Interior, Damascus, 28 Mayıs 1334 (28 May 1918).
- 73 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 585/166, Tahsin to Ministry of Interior, Damascus, 31 Mayıs 1334 (31 May 1918).
- 74 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 586/85, Tahsin to Ministry of Interior, Baalbek, 6 Haziran 1918 (6 June 1918).
- 75 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 591/109, İsmail Hakkı to Ministry of Interior, Beirut, 8 Ağustos 1334 (8 August 1918).
- 76 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, p. 94.
- 77 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 1 October 1915.
- 78 **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 11/23, 9 Mayıs 1333 (9 May 1917).
- 79 **BOA**, DH.EUM 1.Şb 6/16, 2 Ağustos 1332 (15 August 1915).
- 80 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 14 May 1915, p. 124.
- 81 Wasif Jawhariyeh, "My Last Days as an Ottoman Subject: Selections from Wasif Jawhariyeh's Memoirs," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol. 9, 2000, p. 31.
- 82 Jawhariyeh, "My Last Days," p. 33.
- 83 Aaronsohn, *With Turks*, p. 15; at least until April 1913, most of the Arab officers did not have nationalist aspirations. In a letter sent to Izzed al-Jundi by his uncle's son, the latter complained about the absence of the ideal of the motherland (*Vatan*) among the Arab officers, accusing them of being in a state of rebellion against their motherlands and serving the brigand gangs – he meant by this the CUP – who were striving to destroy the Arab nation and language. **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 1/51, Damascus, 7 Nisan 1329 (20 April 1913).
- 84 For the examples, see, Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, (our army) p. 105, (our statesmen) p. 105, (our planes) p. 106, (our officers) pp. 108, 112, (Cemal Pasha, our great leader) p. 110, (our sultan) p. 112, (our ships) p. 117.
- 85 For studies on the modernization of Ottoman education in the nineteenth century, see: Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2003; S. Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire: 1839–1908, Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline*, Leiden: Brill, 2001.

- 86 **BOA**, DH.UMVM 143/21, Educational Director in Jerusalem to Talat, 25 Şubat 1331 (10 March 1916).
- 87 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 49/66, Şeyhülislam to the governor of Jerusalem, 5 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (18 January 1915).
- 88 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 49/44, Cemal to Şeyhülislam, Jerusalem, 3 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (16 January 1915).
- 89 Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, pp. 2–5. In fact, a detailed plan for the establishment of such a *küllîye* in Istanbul was proposed in a report by the Egyptians to Enver Pasha immediately before the war. The proposals in their reports were very similar to the ideas behind the *küllîye*. For the whole of this report see: **TTK Arşivi**, EP Koleksiyonu 4/54, undated.
- 90 Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, p. 6.
- 91 Abd al-Aziz Chavish was born in Alexandria in 1876. His father was from Tunisia. He graduated from al-Azhar (1892) and Dar al-Ulum (1897). During his education, he met Muhammad Abduh. For further education, he went to Great Britain. In 1901, he started to work as an inspector in the Egyptian Ministry of Education. But, the same year, he returned to Great Britain and took a position in Oxford University as an Arabic teacher. In 1905, he joined the 14th Orientalist Congress in Algeria as a member of the Egyptian delegation. In 1906, he returned to Egypt, and joined the movement of Wataniyya (patriotism) organized by Mustafa Kamil and Muhammad Farid. In 1908, he became the chief editor of the *al-Liva* newspaper, the newspaper of the Wataniyya movement. He transformed this newspaper into a platform to spread his pro-Ottoman and pan-Islamic ideas. He was also among the publishers of *al-A'lam* and *al-Sha'b*, and the journal *al-Hidaye*. With these publications, he won considerable influence among the Egyptians. Therefore, he was expelled from Egypt over accusations of causing tension between Muslims and Copts. In 1912, he settled down in Istanbul. During his stay in Istanbul, he published the newspaper *al-Hilal al-Osmani* and the journal *al-Alem al-Islami*. In 1915, he was accused of organizing the attempted assassination of Khedive Abbas Hilmi in Istanbul, and, therefore, had to live in Berlin for a month. At the end of the war, he went to Berlin and stayed there until 1923. In that year, he returned to Egypt, where he died in 1927: Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, p. 37.
- 92 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 467/44, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 26 Mart 1331 (8 April 1915); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 467/46, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 27 Mart 1331 (9 April 1915); Şeyhülislam also supported Cemal in this issue: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 49/77, Şeyhülislam to Cemal, 6 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (19 January 1915).
- 93 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 51/230, Talat to Cemal, 26 Mart 1331 (8 April 1915).
- 94 A graduate of the Law School (Mekteb-i Hukuk), Cemil Bey was appointed instead of him: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 50/130, Şeyhülislam to Cemal Pasha, 15 Şubat 1330 (28 February 1915).
- 95 This aim was openly stated in the German newspaper *Nachrichtsstelle für den Orient* (30/6/1915). For a relevant quotation from this newspaper, see: Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, p. 16.
- 96 In a similar proposal to Enver Pasha for the establishment of a *küllîye* in Istanbul before the war, which would in function be identical to the *küllîye*, the necessity of acting like missionaries was made clear: **TTK Arşivi**, EP Koleksiyonu, 4/54, undated.
- 97 Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, p. 29.
- 98 Strohmeier, *ibid.*, p. 39; one of his relatives, Salih Bey Haidar, ex-mayor of Baalbek, was hanged by Cemal in 1915: **HHStA**, PA 387366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 26 August 1915. After the executions of 1916, the entire Haidar family was exiled to Anatolia: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 504/65, Cemal to Talat, 26 Kanun-ı Evvel 1331 (8 January 1916). However, there is no special record that he was either exiled or exempted from this action.

- 99 Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, p. 42.
- 100 Strohmeier, *ibid.*, p. 54. He was also the co-author of the book *Beyrut Vilayeti*, written at the request of the governor, Azmi Bey, to provide better information about the geography and population of Beirut: Rafiq al-Tamimi and Muhammad Behcet, *Beyrut Vilayeti*, Beirut: Vilayet Matbaası, 1333 (1916).
- 101 Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, pp. 86–87. Approximately the same curriculum had been proposed to Enver Pasha in the above-mentioned project for opening a religious school in İstanbul to educate Muslim missionaries. For details, see: **TTK Arşivi**, EP Koleksiyonu, 4/54, undated.
- 102 Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, pp. 23–24.
- 103 Strohmeier, *ibid.*, p. 68.
- 104 Ali Cengizkan, “Mehmet Nihat Nigisberk’in Katkıları, Evkaf İdaresi ve Mimar Kemalettin,” in Ali Cengizkan (ed.), *Mimar Kemalettin ve Çağı*, Ankara: TMMOB, 2009, p. 183.
- 105 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 26 January 1917.
- 106 Cengizkan, “Mehmet Nihat Nigisberk’in Katkıları,” p. 183.
- 107 By the word “conspiracy,” Halide Edib means Cemal Pasha’s punishment of the Arabists.
- 108 Halide Edib, *Memoirs*, p. 400; Falih Rıfkı similarly assesses the aims of Cemal Pasha with the opening of these schools. He also added that the Ottomanization of Syria would be advanced by these schools: Atay, *Zeytindağı*, p. 77.
- 109 Halide Edib, *Memoirs*, p. 390–91; in his book *Zeytindağı*, Falih Rıfkı confirms these correspondences. Atay, *Zeytindağı*, p. 79.
- 110 Halide Edib, *Memoirs*, p. 391.
- 111 Halide Edib, *ibid.*, p. 431–37; **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 19 February 1917.
- 112 Halide Edib to Cavid Bey, 1 March 1917, Beirut, in Murat Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa’nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, İstanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2009, pp. 149–151.
- 113 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 19 February 1917.
- 114 **BOA**, DH-İ.UM.EK 43/48, Talat to Tahsin, 5 Kanun-ı Evvel 1333 (5 December 1917).
- 115 For a reference with this name, see: **BOA**, DH.UMVM 22/4, Fuad (on behalf of the governor of Syria) to Talat, Damascus, 22 Şubat 1334 (22 February 1918).
- 116 Halide Edib, *Memoirs*, p. 440. In Beirut, the girls’ high school was established in a building confiscated from French institutions. There was a church inside the building. In spite of the opposition of Cemal Pasha, he did not close the church. For further details see: Halide Edib, *Memoirs*, p. 440; Atay, *Zeytindağı*, p. 79.
- 117 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Dandini to Czernin, Aleppo, 16 February 1917.
- 118 Cemal to Enver, 27 September 1917, in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698.
- 119 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 596/5, İsmail Hakkı to Ministry of Interior, Beirut, 13 Ağustos 1334 (13 August 1918).
- 120 Halide Edib, *Memoirs*, p. 440; Martin Strohmeier notes in his article on the *Salahiyya* that Cemal Pasha supported the education of Christians and Muslims together, and therefore promoted a mixture of students from both religions in the girls’ school of Beirut. For details, see: Strohmeier, *Al-Kulliyya as-Salahiya*, p. 6.
- 121 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 19 February 1917. To this end, the language of the Imperial School in Damascus (Şam Mekteb-i Sultanisi) was converted from Arabic to Turkish: **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 21 March 1916.
- 122 Münevver Ayaşlı was one of the Turkish students who were sent to the newly opened state school in Beirut. However, he was very unsatisfied with the education in these schools. But it seems that his evaluations were rather subjective. For his further assessments on Halide Edib and her schools see: Münevver

- Ayaşlı, *İşittiklerim, Gördüklerim, Bildiklerim*, İstanbul: Boğaziçi Yayınları, 1990, pp. 80–81.
- 123 BOA, DH.ŞFR 85/86, Talat to the Director of the Health in Adana, 11 Mart 1334 (11 March 1918).
- 124 Halide Edib, *Memoirs*, p. 402.
- 125 Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," p. 793.
- 126 Halide Edib, *Mor Salkımlı Ev*, p. 234.
- 127 HHStA, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 19 February 1917.
- 128 Hans von Kiesling, *Damaskus Altes und Neues aus Syrien*, Leipzig: Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1919, p. 80; indeed, the preparations for the establishment of a school of agriculture in Damascus had begun in May 1915. Some 25,000 qurush had been added to the budget of the Syrian province for the year 1915. For details, see: BOA, DH.UMVM 132/35, Ministry of Interior to Sadaret, 12 Temmuz 1331 (25 July 1331).
- 129 HHStA, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 18 January 1917.
- 130 Von Kiesling, *Damaskus*, pp. 79–80.
- 131 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 143.
- 132 *Al-Sharq*, "al-Tarbiyatu al-Hadîsati," No. 471, 12 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (12 November 1917).
- 133 TNA, FO 371/2783, Holderness to FO, 2 November 1916.
- 134 HHStA, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 22 November 1917.
- 135 HHStA, PA 12 462, K.K. Österreichische Orient-und Überseegesellschaft, undated.
- 136 HHStA, PA 12/462, K.K. Österreichische Orient-und Überseegesellschaft, undated.
- 137 HHStA, PA 12/462, the secretary of the Orientmission to Czernin, Damascus, 24 January 1918.
- 138 HHStA, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 22 November 1917.
- 139 HHStA, PA 12/462, the secretary of the Orientmission to Czernin, Damascus, 24 January 1918.
- 140 "Exposé sur la Fondation d'une Bibliothèque Orientale G énérale à Damas" par son excellence Ahmed Djemal Pacha, Commandant de la IV. Armée et Ministre de la Marine, Damas, May 1333. From the wording of the text, it can be inferred that the report was prepared by an Ottoman citizen who could not speak Turkish, most likely an Arab, if it was not translated into French for the use of the Germans (I found the document in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, MTÇ).
- 141 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- 142 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- 143 *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.
- 144 *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.
- 145 Wiegand to his wife, 7 May 1917; Wiegand, *Halbmond*, p. 248.
- 146 HHStA, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 17 February 1918; throughout the war, Cemal had to rely on foreign advisors for his development projects for Syria. The opening of these new schools most likely aimed at breaking this dependency.
- 147 According to Hasan Kayalı,

he had a close awareness of the important uses of communications owing to the experience he had gained in his early military career (prior to the Young Turk Revolution) as inspector of Rumelian railroads. Several years later, in the Said Halim Pasha cabinet, he had been entrusted with the portfolio of the ministry of public works.

Kayalı, "Wartime Regional and Imperial Integration," p. 296.

- 148 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 23 May 1915.
- 149 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 21 October 1915.
- 150 According to the unpublished memoirs of the architect Mehmet Nihat Nigisberk, who worked under Cemal in Syria, the construction works were a government policy to gain the sympathy of the Arabs. For details, see: Cengizkan, "Mehmet Nihat Nigisberk'in Katkıları."
- 151 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 17 February 1918.
- 152 Cemal to Enver, 27 September 1917, in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Beirut to von Rosenberg, Beirut, 29 April 1916.
- 153 For its implementation in Beirut, see: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Beirut to von Rosenberg, Beirut, 29 April 1916; for its reflections in the whole of the Syrian provinces, see: Ruppın, *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet*, p. 339.
- 154 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 229.
- 155 Cemal to Enver, 27 September 1917, in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698.
- 156 Luz Nimrod, "The Re-making of Beersheba: Winds of Modernization in the Late Ottoman Sultanate," in Itzhak Weissmann and Fruma Zachs (eds.), *Ottoman Reform and the Muslim Regeneration: Studies in Honor of Butrus Abu-Manneh*, London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005, p. 196.
- 157 Von Kressenstein, *Mit den Türken*, p. 109.
- 158 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Beirut to von Rosenberg, Beirut, 29 April 1916; the Spanish consul in Jerusalem wrote these remarks in his diaries regarding the way the construction works were being conducted:

Yesterday Raphael [his dragoman] and I visited the new major of Jerusalem, Mr. Ertogrul, who showed us, with an air of triumph, the plans for a new road stretching from the Jaffa gate to el Haram al-Sharif, from the next to the walls of Mount Zion and for the asphaltting of Jaffa road. The good man told us that he now has 2.000 Turkish Pounds to begin. But what idea must this man have of what it takes to do works like that? The road alone will cost more than three million Pesetas. It could be, however, that the mayor is right if the Turkish system of not paying the expropriations, nor the workers, nor anything all, continues. So if you have to knock down a house? Well, knock it down and do not pay a cent to the owners.

Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 70.

- 159 **BOA**, DH-İ.UM.EK 21/39, Talat to Azmi, 12 Eylül 1332 (25 September 1916).
- 160 It is worth mentioning that Azmi Bey was not unique. The governors of many cities were punished because of their violations of the expropriation law. For details, see: **BOA**, DH-İ.UM.EK 39/96, Talat to the governorates, 12 Eylül 1332 (25 September 1916).
- 161 Ruppın writes that similar situations came into question for the other provinces Ruppın, *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet*, p. 339.
- 162 **BOA**, ŞD 2321/9, Ministry of Interior to Sadaret, 16 Mayıs 1332 (29 May 1916).
- 163 **BOA**, BEO 4474/335482, Sadaret to Ministry of Interior, 10 Haziran 1333 (10 June 1917).
- 164 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 574/100, Bedri to Talat, Aleppo, 28 Kanun-ı Evvel 1333 (28 December 1917).
- 165 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Beirut to von Rosenberg, Beirut, 29 April 1916.
- 166 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 229; Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 143; it is worth mentioning that, in the English edition of his memoirs, Cemal wrote nothing about his public works activities in Syria.

- 167 Ross Burns, *Damascus: A History*, London and New York: Routledge, 2005, p. 265.
- 168 Von Kiesling, *Damaskus*, p. 93; for a reference to the confiscation of these buildings, see: BOA, DH.UMVM 102/52, Tahsin to Talat, 5 Mayıs 1334 (5 May 1918).
- 169 Burns, *Damascus*, p. 265.
- 170 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 93.
- 171 Ballobar, *ibid.*, p. 102.
- 172 Cemal to Enver, 27 September 1917, in *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri VII*, p. 698.
- 173 Salim Tamari, "Jerusalem's Ottoman Modernity," p. 23.
- 174 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 232. Wasıf Jawhari was among the Ottoman soldiers who were assigned to serve in grain transportation between the east and west shores of the Dead Sea. For details, see: Tamari, "Jerusalem's Ottoman Modernity," p. 23.
- 175 BA-MA, RM 5/2322, Krumbolz to Chief of the Admiralty der Marine, Jerusalem, 5 February 1917.
- 176 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 3 February 1917.
- 177 Wiegand, *Halbmond*, pp. 198–202; see also: Kayalı, "Wartime Regional and Imperial Integration," p. 304.
- 178 Wiegand to his wife, 1 November 1916, in Wiegand, *Halbmond*, p. 198; Von Kress did not participate in this meeting. However, according to his memoirs, he persuaded Cemal to employ scholars like Wiegand in his retinue (*maiyet*), as was done by Napoleon during his campaign against Egypt: Von Kressenstein, *Mit den Türken*, p. 198.
- 179 Cemal Pasha, "İfade-i Meram," Teşrin-i Evvel 1333; "Vorwort," October 1917, in *Suriye ve Filistin ve Garbi Arabistan Abidat-ı Atikası / Alte Denkmäler aus Syrien, Palastina und Westarabien*, Berlin: Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1918.
- 180 *Suriye ve Filistin ve Garbi Arabistan Abidat-ı Atikası / Alte Denkmäler aus Syrien, Palastina und Westarabien*, Verlag von Georg Reimer, Berlin: 1918; there is no author listed on the cover page of the book. Cemal Pasha's name is written as the book's sponsor, but the study was prepared by Wiegand and his friends: Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 235.
- 181 Wiegand, Kressenstein, Schubart, Watzinger, Werth and Wulzinger, *Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen des Deutsch-Türkischen Denkmalschutz-kommandos*, Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1920.
- 182 In his book Von Kiesling praises Cemal Pasha for preventing the illegal trafficking of valuable stones belonging to the monuments of the Islamic period. For details, see: Von Kiesling, *Damaskus*, p. 66.
- 183 Von Kiesling, *ibid.*, p. 36.
- 184 Von Kiesling, *ibid.*, p. 45. Ross Burns notes that the mosque and Tekkie Sinanie was built by the renowned Ottoman architect Mimar Sinan, stating that many elements were borrowed from the local Syrian repertoire. For details, see: Ross Burns, *The Monuments of Syria: A Guide*, London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009, p. 130.
- 185 Von Kiesling, *Damaskus*, p. 78; Ross Burns writes in his guide that "its style, though more distinctly Syrian, blends well with Sinan's work." See: Burns, *Monuments*, p. 131.
- 186 Quoted from the memoirs of Mehmet Nihat Nigisberk by Cengizkan, "Mehmet Nihat Nigisberk'in Katkıları," p. 187.
- 187 The Vakıf Ministry sent 6,000 ltq. to Cemal Pasha for the restoration of the Selimiye Mosque and the Süleymaniye: BOA, DH.ŞFR 63/296, Şeyhülislam to Cemal Pasha, 28 Eylül 1332 (11 October 1916).
- 188 Hüseyin Vassaf wrote a letter to Cemal requesting the restoration of the tomb and Cemal agreed. For the original letter, see: El-Hac Hüseyin Vassaf, *Hicaz Hatırası*, İstanbul: Kubbealtı, 2011, p. 329.

- 189 Wiegand, *Halbmond*, p. 237.
- 190 Von Kiesling, *Damaskus*, p. 66.
- 191 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 63/298, Şeyhülislam to Cemal Pasha, 28 Nisan 1332 (11 May 1916).
- 192 Built to strengthen a strategically weak point in the Old City's defenses, the citadel that stands today was constructed during the second century BC and was subsequently destroyed and rebuilt by, in succession, the Christian, Muslim, Mamluk, and Ottoman conquerors of Jerusalem. Finally, it was rebuilt by the Ottomans between 1537 and 1541 and they added a minaret. The name "Tower of David" is due to Byzantine Christians who believed the site to be the palace of King David: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_of_David.
- 193 The location of the current citadel was first fortified in 1076 by the Turkman warlord Atsiz bin Uvak, although it is possible but not proven that a citadel stood on this place in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. After the assassination of Atsiz bin Uvak, the project was finished by the Seljuq ruler Tutush I. The emirs of the subsequent Burid and Zengid dynasties carried out modifications and added new structures to it: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citadel_of_Damascus.
- 194 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 230.
- 195 Cemal Pasha, *ibid.*, pp. 230–231.
- 196 It is considered to be one of the oldest and largest castles in the world. Usage of the citadel hill dates back at least to the middle of the third millennium BC. Subsequently occupied by many civilizations including the Greeks, Byzantines, Ayyubids, and Mamluks, the majority of the construction as it stands today is thought to originate from the Ayyubid period: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citadel_of_Aleppo.
- 197 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 231.
- 198 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 17 February 1918.
- 199 Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*.
- 200 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Köppen to the War Ministry, Damascus, 26 September 1916.
- 201 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 5 September 1917.

6 The Druze and the Bedouin under Cemal Pasha's regime

Quite the reverse of the urban residents of Syria we analyzed in the previous chapters, the unsettled and nomadic portions of Syrian society enjoyed a significant amount of freedom under the regime of Cemal Pasha. With the initiation of the Tanzimat reforms the Ottoman government had endeavored to subordinate the Bedouins and the Druze to the Ottoman administration. By the time World War I began, some progress had been made in this direction, although the Bedouin and the Druze communities protected their distinctive structures to a considerable extent. However, Cemal, worried about the possibility of rebellion, which would put him in a difficult position militarily in the circumstances of war, did not maintain this policy. Thus, he returned to the traditional imperial policy, permitting them a large amount of freedom of action in return for their loyalty.

Although the Ottoman tribal policy in Syria in the pre-war period has for the most part been adequately analyzed,¹ Ottoman policy toward the Bedouin and Druze during Cemal's rule in Syria has not received the attention it deserves. The only exceptions in this regard are some summaries in Rogan's study regarding Cemal Pasha's treatment of the tribes in Transjordan before and after the outbreak of the sharif's revolt. In this chapter, however, Cemal's policy toward these two significant non-urban elements of Syrian society will be analyzed in light of documents from various Western and Ottoman archives. To this end, the reasons behind and consequences of Cemal's policy toward the Druze will be discussed. Following this the relations between the Bedouin tribes and tribal dynasties and the Ottoman Empire before and after the outbreak of the sharif's revolt will be dealt with.

The Druze: freedom of action in return for loyalty

One of the biggest nomadic communities in Syria, the Druze in Syria belonged to the Shi'ite sect of Islam. Their religion was formed during the first half of the fifth century of Hijra (the eleventh century CE). Its origins lay in the religious teachings and exhortations of the sixth Fatimid caliph, al-Hakim Bi-Amr Allah, in Cairo.² From the very beginning of their emergence, the Druze subsisted through agriculture, dispersed among the impenetrable

mountainous areas of Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria.³ Their lifestyle and religion differed considerably from those of the Muslims of Syria. Because of their productive agriculture, during World War I, they played a crucial role in the provisioning of both the civil population and the army. Therefore, gaining the support of the Druze was of crucial importance during the war.

As explained in Chapter 2, at the beginning of the war, especially among the Lebanese Druze, some tendencies favoring Great Britain prevailed, since their interests in the Lebanese autonomous system had been upheld by the British against the Maronite majority for half a century.⁴ However, according to a report from the governor of Beirut, the Druze's sympathy to Great Britain was largely superficial: At heart they sympathized with the Ottoman government because of the religious ties they shared.⁵ Another factor, which was probably a relief to the Ottoman authorities, was the Druze's politically pragmatic character. According to the representative of the German consul in Syria, the Druze could change their loyalty easily from one authority to another when the dominant power over their lands changed, on condition that their freedom was guaranteed.⁶ It can be inferred from this that if Cemal Pasha had restricted their freedom, the Druze would have been more open to British propaganda throughout the war.

Because of their resistance to discipline, even in the years preceding the war the Druze community had been exempted from many of the obligations that applied to Ottoman subjects from other communities in the region. The outbreak of the war did not change the situation in this sense; first of all, the Druze were exempted from military service in the Ottoman army, although there were 30,000 men in the Druze community fit to bear arms. Moreover, they did not pay tithe from their harvests. They were a community that produced wheat, barley, lentils, and some summer fruits.⁷

In the delicate circumstances of the war, the Druze had to be treated carefully, as they had a reputation as fearsome warriors,⁸ and a rebellion organized or supported by them could put the government militarily in a very difficult position.⁹ Therefore, throughout the duration of the war, both Cemal Pasha and his predecessors were very careful to avoid frustrating the Druze community. The government's activities toward them focused on two points: giving them a generous amount of freedom compared to other religious or tribal communities, and taking advantage of their produce, such as food and animals, for the provisioning of the army and the civilian population, avoiding any kind of provocation while dealing with them.

Initially, the government planned to recruit the Druze into the armed service at the beginning of the mobilization, given their reputation as warriors and the opportunity to bring them closer to the state. However, the Druze did not accept this and, instead, proposed to be exempted from military service in exchange for payment and the provisioning of the troops. The government considered coercive measures, but the community's offers had to be accepted for fear of a Druze rebellion.¹⁰ Similarly, the leader of the Druze community in Djebel-i Druze, Yahya Bey al-Atrash, came to Damascus with his nephew

Nasib to negotiate with the Ottoman government on behalf of all Druze.¹¹ Although the government regarded their pledge of loyalty with suspicion, they had to accept it, even if just for practical reasons.¹²

Similarly, in early September 1914, the highest government authorities in Syria – army commander Zeki Pasha, Syrian governor Hulusi Bey, commander of the 8th Army Corps Mersinli Cemal Pasha, Senator Abd al-Rahman Bey, and Amir Ali Pasha, the vice-president of the Ottoman Parliament, and his son from the celebrated al-Jazairi family – visited the Druze sheikhs in Hauran, Deraa, and Maan to secure their support in the event of hostilities against the “infidels.” The leader of the Druze, Yahya Bey al-Atrash, accompanied them throughout their journey. Zeki Pasha addressed them as children of the sultan, who would rely upon their loyalty to defend their country in case his troops became involved in the war. In this visit, a sword of honor, a gold watch inscribed with the sultan’s name, and a robe of honor were presented to Yahya Bey al-Atrash and the other Druze leaders were given swords, medals, and robes of honor according to each sheikh’s position and importance. During the visit, Hulusi Bey announced that the government was pleased with the Druze and that they would henceforth be exempt from military service, though forming a Volunteer Corps to come nobly forward in time of need.¹³

In the same visit, these government authorities visited the Bedouins that lived near the Druze and helped resolve feuds between the two communities. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, in spite of this reconciliation, the government intended to manipulate the population of the region to use them against each other, since they were worried about a Druze rebellion. Therefore, the government was encouraging the Bedouins between the south of Syria and Inner Arabia to return to their pastures in southern Syria in the hopes of counter-balancing the Druze in the event of an uprising. Similarly, the consul suggested that the government wanted to balance the Christians of Lebanon with the Druze of the Hebron district in the event of a rebellion.¹⁴

This policy of handling the Druze with kid gloves did not change with the appointment of Cemal Pasha as the governor general of Syria. When Cemal Pasha arrived in Syria every faction among the Muslims there advised him to strike a blow against the Druze to subjugate them during the war. Cemal disregarded this advice, believing that it would be a mistake to antagonize this warrior people against the government. Cemal saw his army as capable of suppressing any Druze revolt in Lebanon, but a similar revolt in Hauran could result in serious damage to the military situation in Syria. Therefore, Cemal preferred to leave them as free as possible of government obligations.¹⁵ For example, the government made it obligatory for the other tribal and settled farmers to give one-eighth of their harvests as tithe, and to sell two-eighths to the army for provisioning. This requirement was not extended to the Druze. Instead, in a practice inherited from the times of local notables the *Ayan* in the eighteenth century, the government assigned the right of tax collection to the Druze chiefs, who collected a fraction of the real amount owed.

The Druze farmers could sell their produce on the open market. In addition, Cemal Pasha distributed plenty of gold to the Druze sheikhs to buy their support. Like his predecessor, in the beginning of his governorate Cemal Pasha tried to get military support from the Druze. Thus, he welcomed the fatwa of the Babülmeşihat in which the Druze were declared to be members of Islam. But he abandoned this project because of their reluctance to participate.¹⁶

Cemal tried to bring the Druze community closer to the state as much as possible, but with lighter methods in comparison to his policies regarding the urban population. Thus, the Druze were employed in the army only as volunteers. As was explained before, in his visit to the Druze district Hulusi Bey had requested that the Druze create a volunteer force. They accepted this offer and sent a brigade of 150 men to Damascus.¹⁷ The Druze of Hauran was the only volunteer group in Cemal Pasha's army. According to the Austrian consul, the government aimed to restore good relations between the Druze and the state with such policies.¹⁸

Cemal was quite tolerant toward the Druze even when he found open evidence of their disloyalty, which can be seen as the most sensitive issue for him in Syria. For example, when the documents in the French consulates were confiscated, proof of "treason" on the part of the Druze leader Yahya al-Atrash had been found. This was a letter in which the leader of the Druze had promised to support France in the event of its occupation of Syria. This document had been prepared when al-Atrash was in exile in Rhodes, and he signed it reluctantly in return for his release from Rhodes when Italy invaded the island. Although Cemal Pasha could not be sure of the authenticity of the letter, he refrained from drawing attention to the document so as to avoid provoking the Druze.¹⁹

The outbreak of the sharifian revolt made Cemal Pasha even more careful in his treatment of the Druze community. His visit to the Druze region in Hauran in the middle of 1916, after the outbreak of the sharif's revolt in Mecca, can be deemed as one of the most important actions taken by him to gain the sympathy of the Druze on behalf of the Ottoman Empire. With this visit, for first time in the history of the empire, an Ottoman minister visited the Druze. He was accepted warmly by the Druze chiefs, and the most prominent Druze sheikhs accompanied him throughout this journey.²⁰ With this visit, he aimed to forestall any attempt by Great Britain or the sharif's men to incorporate the Druze into the sharif's movement. To this end, Cemal Pasha distributed plenty of gold, decorations, honorary gifts, and rifles. In Cemal's own words, he "prevented with this visit the designs of the seditionists, who for years applied every means to make the Druze revolt."²¹

In the same way, Cemal Pasha demanded the appointment of powerful and capable *kaymakams* to the Druze towns to effectively conduct the struggle against British and sharifian propaganda. Similarly, he requested the appointment of prominent and trusted Syrians, who had influence over the Druze, as the *mudirs* of the Druze *nahiyes* provided that they be dismissed after the war.²² It can be inferred from the telegram of the governor of Syria,

which was sent approximately one year after Cemal sent these appointment requests to Istanbul, that the requested *kaymakams* still had not been sent to the Druze towns.²³

Education was another tool used by Cemal to win the Druze community's support for the Ottomans. Well aware of the transformative nature of education, Cemal Pasha sent the sons of the prominent Druze chiefs to Istanbul for education, both to earn their fathers' support and to ensure that the next generation of Druze chiefs would be pro-Ottoman and contribute to the integration of the Druze into the imperial system. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, it was this policy that prevented Druze society from cooperating with the Bedouins in the rebellion in Hauran that commenced in October 1916 in reaction to military requisitioning.²⁴

After the arrival of Faysal's troops in southern Syria and the deployment of the British troops around Gaza, the situation of the Druze became even more of a crucial issue for the progress of the battle in Palestine. In the middle of 1917, the sharif's men came to the Druze district to persuade their chiefs to organize a general rebellion with the Bedouin tribes in the region against the Ottoman government. However, according to the governor of Damascus, Tahsin Bey, both the Druze chiefs and most of the leading tribes in the region remained entirely loyal to the Ottoman Empire.²⁵

Subsequently, a British mission with 200 Indian cavalry came to the leader of the Druze, Salim al-Atrash, son of Yahya, through Basra-Najaf-Djof-Kaf, and offered 200,000 sterling and 100,000 rifles in exchange for their agreement to rebel against the Ottomans. The Druze chiefs held a meeting to discuss the issue. Salim al-Atrash and most of the Druze chiefs argued that remaining with the Ottoman Empire would be more beneficial for the Druze and that siding with the British would worsen their situation. Some advocated siding with the British, but their ideas were not welcome among the Druze chiefs. Salim al-Atrash also informed Cemal Pasha about the incident. In response, Salim was invited to Damascus and honored by Cemal Pasha with the title of pasha.²⁶

Cemal's policy toward the Druze was maintained by his successors after his departure from Syria. Especially following the British capture of Jerusalem, sustaining good relations with the Druze community was one of the most important objectives of Ottoman policy in Syria, since the region populated by the Druze became the frontier between the British, the sharif, and the Ottomans. Every side in the battle was aware that a Druze revolt against the Ottoman Empire would have a decisive impact on the course of events on the Palestinian front.²⁷

The sharif's men continued to repeat their offers to the Druze chiefs regularly. But their offers were consistently refused. In June 1918, the grandson of Sharif Hussein, Ali, attempted to bring the Druze to their cause via the Damascene notable Nasib al-Bakri, who offered a great amount of British gold in return for their support. His offer was refused by the leader of the Druze, Salim al-Atrash, with a letter stating the loyalty of the Druze to the

sultan-caliph and declaring that the sharif was their enemy. Consequently, al-Atrash was honored with the High Ottoman Medal and the German Iron Cross.²⁸

Toward the end of the war in Syria, some Druze sheikhs began to trade with the districts that were under British control and with Sharif Ali, and they cited the British demand for food as a factor behind the increase in the prices of the cereals that they sold. Similarly, the caravan trade between the two districts continued through the Druze district. However, the Druze chiefs did not change their essential attitude of loyalty to the Ottoman government.²⁹

With the beginning of the final British attack against Damascus on 19 September, the Ottoman front was severely damaged. Therefore, the government feared that the Druze would change sides.³⁰ Following the commencement of the British advance against Damascus, the Druze chiefs came to the city and again declared their loyalty to the Ottoman government. While the Ottoman troops were retreating toward Damascus, the Druze chiefs went to Liman von Sanders and stated their allegiance to him, offering to join the war against the British forces if they were provided with guns and ammunition. However, Liman could not give them these supplies because of the material shortages faced by the army.³¹ All in all, the Druze stayed loyal to the Ottoman Empire until the very end of Ottoman rule in Syria.³²

In return for the Druze's political support for the Ottoman government, Cemal Pasha provided them with significant administrative and financial autonomy. When the taxes and requisitions for the army were estimated in the Syrian provinces, the production of the Druze district was left out of the expected amount because of their exemptions. However, this never meant that the Druze did not contribute to the provisioning of the army. During the war period, they provided a considerable amount of cereals for the troops in Syria in critical times in spite of the deficiency of available transportation. More importantly, the Druze farmers played a crucial role in the provisioning of Damascus. Toward the end of every year during the war, the reserves of cereals in the Druze districts prevented the emergence of famine in the city, although they did raise their prices like speculators to take the maximum advantage of those critical times. The government avoided taking harsh measures against them in order to facilitate the purchase of cereals, and this produced satisfactory results in terms of the food supply.³³

Their exemption from military service and requisitioning prevented the Druze from facing the disinclination to work that other Syrian farmers suffered during the war. As will be shown below, agricultural production in Syria had been badly damaged by the lack of manpower and pack animals as a consequence of military recruitment and the requisitioning of animals for transportation. Exemption from these two obligations provided the Druze with a cereal surplus in every year of the war.³⁴ Furthermore, the surplus of the Druze farmers attracted the Syrians who had escaped from starvation and poverty, as well as deserters and farmers seeking to avoid military requisitioning. According to information provided by a British report on the Druze,

Djebel-i Druze was harbouring at least 10,000 refugees.³⁵ The Druze did not hesitate to feed them and strove to improve their living conditions. Thus, they contributed indirectly to the provisioning of Syrian society.³⁶

Besides their financial autonomy, the Druze region, to a large extent, was free of the Ottoman bureaucratic hierarchy. According to the remarks of a German working in the Damascus consulate, the authority of the Ottoman government in the Druze district was almost entirely absent. This district was annexed to Hauran administratively, and there was a *kaymakam* there. The German official stated that the role of that *kaymakam* was no more than that of a diplomatic agent or consul of the Ottoman government in the region. In Sueyda, mostly populated by the Druze, there was only a group of 20 gendarmes and no actual state authority.³⁷

It is reasonable to conclude, on the basis of all these policies, that Cemal Pasha's approach to the Druze aimed at securing their loyalty by giving them broad autonomy in the circumstances of war. As a result of the difficulties that made controlling them in any other way impossible, Cemal applied the policy of autonomy. In the midst of the war, it would have been impossible to implement any other method. This policy of freedom provided a significant advantage to the Ottoman government in their struggle with Great Britain and the sharif for the support of the Druze. Otherwise, he would have had to struggle against the Druze militarily, which would have put him at a disadvantage in his war against Great Britain on the Sinai front, and would have made the Druze sympathetic to the British. A similar policy was applied to the Bedouin tribes in Syria and Arabia, producing similar results.

The Bedouins: cooperation under the flag of the caliph

Cemal's policy toward the Bedouin tribes was, in essence, quite similar to his policy toward the Druze and he did not undertake any attempt to Ottomanize the Bedouin tribes. However, while the government was freer in its treatment of some Bedouin tribes until the outbreak of the sharifian revolt, especially those who were nearer the Ottoman administrative areas, overall they were not as autonomous as the Druze communities. For example, the nomadic tribes were subjected to harsh requisitioning by the army, as well as extra taxes. Yet, as in the case of Cemal's treatment of urban populations, the rise of the sharif's movement led to moderation in Cemal's tribal policy and resulted in some extra costs for him but more freedom from government control for the tribes.

Bedouin tribes until the outbreak of the sharifian revolt

Shortly before the outbreak of World War I, a considerable portion of the population in Syria, Palestine, and Arabia belonged to large or small Bedouin tribes. For centuries, it had been difficult for the states that ruled the region to take these communities under governmental control because of their nomadic

lifestyles. They were fond of their liberty, and any curtailment of their freedom could cause a rebellion. Therefore, under circumstances of war, the administration of these tribes was an important issue for Cemal Pasha.

Although some progress had been made in settling these tribes in the pre-war years,³⁸ when the war began, as will be shown below, they still had considerable autonomy and sufficient manpower to either resist government control or support its military activities. At the beginning of the mobilization the government requested their military and political support. Almost all the small and large tribes in Syria accepted the call of the caliph to rally behind his flag.³⁹ But Cemal Pasha abandoned the use of Bedouin troops in his military operations since they were irregulars and thus ineffective against regular armies.⁴⁰ Instead, he employed some Bedouin and Druze "volunteers" with political considerations in the army, sometimes as hostages and sometimes to honor them.⁴¹ It was more important for Cemal Pasha to gain their political support, and thus to prevent their rebellion against the Ottoman state by changing sides. In addition, tribal support was of the utmost importance for the supply of pack animals and, in some places, for the provisioning of the army.

In a speech delivered in Lebanon after the fall of Jerusalem, and in his memoirs, Cemal Pasha attributed his failure in the Egyptian expedition to a lack of support from the tribal chiefs and Sharif Hussein. In other words, if these leaders had supported him, he would have saved Egypt from the "British yoke."⁴² Similarly, Turkish official history blames the "urban and tribal Arabs" for the Ottoman defeat in Syria.⁴³ An analysis of Cemal's relations with the tribal chiefs, therefore, will also help in evaluating such claims. By both examining his claims and interrogating the "treason" thesis of official Turkish history regarding the Arabs, this section will shed light on Cemal Pasha's policy toward the tribes, with an emphasis on its political aspects.

Throughout the war, Cemal Pasha and his predecessors competed with Great Britain for the loyalty and support of the Bedouins dispersed between southern Palestine and the Persian Gulf. Immediately prior to and following the outbreak of war in Europe, the Ottoman authorities visited all the prominent Bedouin chiefs in Syria and Arabia and sought their guarantee of support in the event of the emergence of any hostility between the caliph of Islam and any other foreign power.⁴⁴ In return for their loyalty, the Bedouin chiefs were awarded with considerable gifts and honors.⁴⁵ Moreover, most of them were paid high salaries by Cemal Pasha.⁴⁶ In some cases, if their active assistance could not be secured, the Ottoman authorities came to an agreement with the Bedouin chiefs for their friendly neutrality. Their appeals for the support of the Bedouins were made in the framework of a general pan-Islamic movement.⁴⁷

The British, on the other hand, contemplated reconciling the Bedouin chiefs and winning their support by highlighting the issue of the Arab caliphate. This would have amounted to counter-propaganda against the pan-Islamic policies of the Ottoman side. However, they did not contemplate

any direct intervention in the issue of the organization of an Arab rebellion around the Arab caliph against the Ottoman Empire, so as to avoid making the Arab population think that the movement was a British plot, which would have increased Arab sympathy toward the Ottomans. Rather, they preferred to develop the anti-Turkish sentiments that already existed through the internal dynamics of the Arab society. It is worth noting that all the British experts on the region accepted the suitability of the sharif of Mecca for the post of the Arab caliphate.⁴⁸

There were three tribal dynasties targeted by the competition between the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain for their loyalty, dispersed between Mesopotamia, southern Syria, and inner Arabia. These were headed by Ibn Rashid in Hail, Nuri Shalaan in Djof, and Bin Saud in Najd. According to the British official Wingate, Ibn Rashid was a young man of 25, of no great force of character. Nuri Shalaan was an old man of 70, but had a son, Nawwaf, aged 40, who was an energetic and capable man. Finally, Ibn Saud was a fine Arab of about 43 years of age, with great ambitions, and was clearly anxious to increase his resources and prestige by every means available to him.⁴⁹

Regarding their attitude toward the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain at the beginning of the war, the situation favored the Ottoman Empire, and, as will be detailed below, stayed this way up to the end of the war. The most uncertain figure among these chiefs for the empire was Ibn Saud. He was pacified with a treaty signed before the commencement of the war in May 1914 recognizing his autonomy in the Najd district and appointing him as the Ottoman governor of Najd.⁵⁰ After the declaration of war, the government renewed its treaty with Ibn Saud and declared him the Ottoman governor and commander of Najd.⁵¹ However, as a result of the historical antagonism and sectarian differences between the two sides,⁵² Bin Saud was always suspicious of the Ottoman government,⁵³ and did not cut all his ties with Great Britain throughout the war. As for Ibn Rashid, his policies were not so different from those of Ibn Saud, although he was a loyal supporter of the Ottoman Empire from the very beginning. In early days of the war, he wanted to eliminate his mortal enemy, Ibn Saud, with the help of the Ottoman Empire, and therefore depicted himself as a representative of the Ottoman Empire, and situated his struggle with Ibn Saud within the framework of a general policy of *Jihad* against Great Britain.⁵⁴ Similarly, Nuri Shalaan answered the call of the government to support the mobilization positively and notified the state of his readiness at any moment to offer his 2,000 men for service.⁵⁵ However, due to his pro-Druze attitude in the Druze rebellion of 1911, Nuri was regarded as unreliable by the government,⁵⁶ and Ottoman surveillance of his actions continued throughout the whole duration of war, although he did not definitively change sides almost until the end of hostilities in Syria.⁵⁷

As for the relations between these tribes, the circumstances were far from convenient for the policies of the Ottoman Empire. There were conflicts between Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid, and between Ibn Rashid and

Nuri Shalaan, preventing the implementation of the government's pan-Islamic policy, which required reconciliation and an alliance between those tribes against the common enemy, at least temporarily. Therefore, both Cemal Pasha and the Ottoman central government tried to resolve the problems between the tribal dynasties both to motivate them for *Jihad* and to prevent the development of any sympathies toward Great Britain that could stem from their problems with each other.⁵⁸

The first issue facing the Ottoman government regarding the tribal dynasties after the proclamation of *Jihad* was the hostility between Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid, dating back long before the period under study, to the origins of the Rashidis. According to information provided by Wingate, the Rashidi dynasty of Hail began as the agent generals (*wakil*) of the Saudi dynasty, toward the middle of the nineteenth century. When Muhammad Ali of Egypt's son Tosun Pasha invaded the Hijaz and compelled Bin Saud to take refuge in Kuwait, the Rashidi family of Hail became independent of their chiefs and invaded their center, Riyadh. In 1902, Ibn Saud regained his power and expelled the Rashidi governor from Riyadh. He occupied all the southeastern provinces that for 30 years had been under the control of Ibn Rashid. In that year, Ibn Saud advanced northwestward into Kassim, but was made to retreat by a Turkish force sent to cooperate with Ibn Rashid. However, in 1906 he returned to Kassim, and held that district in tribute thereafter. After this, Ibn Saud aspired to regain Hail, which formed part of his forebear's dominions, and which had only become independent in the year 1847.⁵⁹

In retaliation for this hostility, early in 1915 Ibn Rashid advanced into Ibn Saud's territory, northwest of Riyadh. A battle was fought in which Ibn Rashid won a striking victory. The governor of Syria, Hulusi Bey, claimed that the reason for the fighting was the rivalry between Ibn Subhan, the vizier of Ibn Rashid, and the members of the Rashidi family, who took refuge with Ibn Saud.⁶⁰ Similarly, in a letter sent by Ibn Rashid to Ibn Saud, the former blames Ibn Subhan for their battle.⁶¹ In the battle, Ibn Saud lost a considerable number of troops: 1,500 killed and 1,200 wounded. The British representative with Ibn Saud, Shakespeare, was captured dead by Ibn Rashid with three other British officials. Moreover, according to Dr. Prüfer, a German official in Jerusalem, two sons and three relatives of Ibn Saud were killed.⁶² Ibn Rashid wanted to exhibit the heads of the British dead in a square in Damascus, but because of the treaty between the empire and Ibn Saud, the proposal was rejected by the government.⁶³ At the end of this battle, Ibn Rashid recaptured the disputed district of Kassim⁶⁴ and plundered all the villages there.⁶⁵ The British sources claim that Ibn Rashid was encouraged by the Turks.⁶⁶ However, the Ottoman records indicate that the Ottomans took every measure to prevent this battle, partly fearing the defeat of their loyal confederate, Ibn Rashid, and partly as a consequence of their reconciliatory policy of pan-Islamism,⁶⁷ even though Ibn Rashid had produced letters from Ibn Saud proposing cooperation against the Ottoman government.⁶⁸

Contrary to the British claims, soon after the battle the Ottoman government called for the restoration of peace between the two tribes. However, the reluctance of Ibn Rashid to join in negotiations⁶⁹ made it necessary to form a mediation delegation through the intervention of the Ottoman government in consultation with Cemal Pasha, to end the hostilities upon the request of Ibn Saud.⁷⁰ The mediation delegation consisted of prominent Arab figures, including Sharif Faysal and Salih Sharif al-Tunusi. According to the report of the Austrian consul in Damascus, this peace was aimed at securing the allegiance of all Muslim leaders to the caliphate, with special emphasis on Ibn Saud, who was known for his Wahhabi sentiments opposing the legitimacy of the Ottoman caliph. Moreover, the Ottoman government planned to seek the support of these two chiefs in the Mesopotamian war theater.⁷¹

As a result of the pressure of the Ottoman government and Cemal Pasha, in July 1915 Ibn Rashid gave his consent to a peace with Ibn Saud. He did not want to abandon his allegiance to the Ottoman caliph by preventing the establishment of peace in the region. In the treaty the two chiefs agreed to return to the *status quo ante-bellum*. The success of the Ottoman government in bringing about peace increased both its prestige and authority over these tribes, and the problem was solved within the framework of Cemal Pasha's tribal policy.⁷² Another reason behind the Ottoman Empire's decision to step in to resolve the conflict was its concern regarding the sharif of Mecca. Sharif Abdullah's movement from Taif, accompanied by troops, toward Kasim and Najd raised suspicions about him. The government likely worried that Abdullah would establish peace among the chiefs and thereby increase his prestige in the region.⁷³

Another conflict among the tribal chiefs was that between Nuri Shalaan, the leader of the Ruela tribe, and Ibn Rashid over the ownership of the region of Djof. While the government was trying to establish peace between Ibn Rashid and Ibn Saud, to prevent the commencement of further hostility between Nuri Shalaan and Ibn Rashid, Cemal Pasha entertained Nuri Shalaan, together with his son Nawwaf and his 40 men, as his guests in Damascus for about nine months. Nuri was welcomed with great military honor by the authorities. Nuri told the Austrian consul that he had departed from his land and people because of the hostility between him and the Shammar tribe of Ibn Rashid over the possession of Djof. He also noted that his peace proposal was not accepted by Ibn Rashid.⁷⁴ According to the Austrian consul, in remarks made six months after Nuri's arrival in Damascus, when peace was restored between Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid, permission would be issued for the return of the chief of the Ruela tribe.⁷⁵

The return of the territory of Kasim to Ibn Saud obligated the government to compensate the losses of its loyal supporter, Ibn Rashid, with other lands. For this reason, he easily occupied Djof in the absence of Nuri and Nawwaf with the permission and approval of the government. With this decision the government antagonized the Ruela tribe, which could create problems for its goals in the region.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, Ibn Rashid broke the peace again with Ibn Saud just two months after its restoration by occupying Kassim for a second time. Although he later withdrew, the action damaged both the peace and the government's authority in the region. Furthermore, in Kassim, Ibn Rashid captured a caravan of 900 camels that belonged to Tawfik Siuffi, who procured goods for the Ottoman army. He gave excuses for his delay in meeting the government's request for compensation. All these events increased the authorities' resentment against Ibn Rashid, while bringing about a restoration of relations between Nuri Shalaan and the government. Thereupon, the government allowed Nawwaf to return and recapture Djof. Moreover, an official message arrived approving of Nuri's appointment as the *kaymakam* of Djof. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, with this appointment the scope of Ottoman rule was extended to Djof, which had been practically independent until then, and the Ottoman Empire gained a strong point of support in central Arabia.⁷⁷

With the resolution of the disagreement between Ibn Rashid and Nuri Shalaan, the tribal leaders entered a period of tranquility, generally accepting the Ottoman government as their supreme power until the commencement of the sharifian revolt in Mecca in June 1916.⁷⁸ To summarize the attitude of the chiefs in this period, Ibn Saud attempted to maintain a balance between the British and Ottoman sides while still recognizing the Ottomans' authority. He gave the impression to the British side that he was struggling against Ottoman domination in the region and that he was filled with hatred against them.⁷⁹ On the other hand, he told the Ottoman officials that he had to take British policy into consideration in his cooperation with the Ottoman government, since they were very close to his area of domination. But in reality he did not give his loyalty to either side unconditionally, and did not really choose his side until British supremacy in his region became certain.⁸⁰ It is known that Ibn Rashid was a loyal supporter of the Ottoman cause and did not change his attitude until the very end of the war. Unlike the other two chiefs, he actively helped the Ottomans in their struggle in the Mesopotamian war theater and later in the struggle against Sharif Hussein of Mecca, which will be detailed in the next section.⁸¹ Nuri Shalaan would change his side toward the end of the war in favor of the British.

Aside from these three chiefs, the Ottoman Empire also invited Imam Yahya of Yemen, Sheikh Ahmet Sharif al-Senussi, Sayyid Idrissi of Asir, and Mubarak of Kuwait to rally behind the flag of the caliph, and Cemal Pasha took an active role in the relations between these leaders and the empire.⁸² While keeping their ties with Great Britain, Idrissi and Mubarak did not enter into any significant hostility with the Ottoman Empire during the war, maintaining a certain neutrality.⁸³ Senussi and the *imam* actively cooperated with the Ottoman Empire in its struggle against Great Britain.⁸⁴ Apart from the great tribal dynasties, plenty of smaller tribes in Syria, Arabia, and Yemen remained pro-Ottoman throughout the war.⁸⁵ As a final remark, it is worth mentioning that all these policies and negotiations were made in consultation

with Cemal Pasha, and his advice was always taken into consideration by the policymakers in Istanbul.

The outbreak of the sharif's rebellion against the caliph with the support of the tribes around Mecca created a change in the Ottoman policy toward the Bedouin tribes. However, the sharif's proclamation of rebellion did not cause an essential turn in the attitude of these tribes against Ottoman authority; while the attitude of the great tribal dynasties remained principally unchanged until the last months of the war, some small tribes were won over by British gold toward the end. Others, however, remained loyal to the Ottoman government.

Transformation of tribal policy after the sharifian revolt

The commencement of Sharif Hussein's movement in Mecca signified a new period in Ottoman tribal policy in Syria and Arabia, and gave the British a new legitimizing tool to increase their influence among the tribes. On the other hand, as will be detailed below, it resulted in Cemal Pasha increasing disbursements of money and cereals to maintain the support of the large and small tribes. In the existing literature, the British sharifian policy aimed at gaining the support of the Arab tribes has been examined in detail.⁸⁶ However, Cemal Pasha's competition with these sides has not yet been studied thoroughly. Before proceeding it should be mentioned that, since the ultimate source of all archival and non-archival resources was the tribes themselves, who were liable to exaggeration, the present study tries to be as comparative as circumstances permit.

In addition to the military measures taken to prevent the spread of the sharif's movement into Syria and Arabia, Cemal Pasha attempted to bolster the loyalty of the larger and smaller tribes, as a counter-measure against the British policy of rallying all the Arab leaders under the sharif's caliphate.⁸⁷ In addition, most of the smaller and larger tribes were supplied with significant amounts of cereals by Cemal Pasha in return for their allegiance. This policy was to be among the most important causes of the profound shortage of food in Syria.⁸⁸ Moreover, throughout the remainder of the war, Cemal Pasha distributed medals and decorations to most of the tribal leaders in Syria and northern Arabia so that they would not change their sides or abandon their neutrality.⁸⁹

As for the tribal dynasties of northern and inner Arabia, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Ibn Rashid again stood out as the most loyal supporter of the Ottoman struggle against Sharif Hussein. The Ottoman government intended to encourage the Shammar tribe against the sharif, providing Ibn Rashid with abundant gold.⁹⁰ During this period, the Ottoman government also dispatched artillery to Ibn Rashid.⁹¹ However, according to the Austrian consul in Damascus, Ibn Rashid remained distant from the project since he did not want to invite the hostilities of Great Britain and other local powers in the region. On the other hand, the consul neglected the

point that the Ottoman government's final goal in the region was to assert its own authority against the local chiefs. Therefore, Enver Pasha was reluctant to endorse this action, preferring not to "cosset one Amir, while trying to abolish another one."⁹² With the Ottomans' abandonment of the idea of an operation against the Hijaz this option fell off the agenda.

The British capture of Baghdad signified the beginning of hard times for Ibn Rashid. The Shammar tribe met all its needs in Baghdad. The blocking of this connection caused starvation in Hail.⁹³ His townsfolk and tribesmen complained about his pro-Ottoman policy, from which they themselves derived no profit.⁹⁴ It was also difficult for Cemal Pasha to send them food because of the famine prevailing in Syria. Ibn Rashid's authority among his people was damaged as a consequence.⁹⁵ On top of this, the Shammar tribe was blockaded by the British government, which expelled its caravans from Kuwait by force.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, the British officials were unsuccessful in winning him over to their side.

The intensification of the sharif's influence over the tribes along the Hijaz Railroad around Medina once again influenced the Ottoman approach to relations with Ibn Rashid. As a counter-measure to the sharif's actions, the Ottoman central government, in consultation with Cemal Pasha, persuaded Ibn Rashid to resettle around the Hijaz Railroad station at Medain Salih, 350 kilometers north of Medina. He was resettled there with two aims: to frighten the tribes who were disloyal to the government and to strengthen the sense of allegiance among the loyal tribes. According to the Austrian consul, as a result of this action, the Fukara tribe abandoned its attacks on the Hijaz Railroad, and some branches of the Beni Atije and Beni Sakhr tribes were persuaded to protect the railroad. Cemal Pasha suggested that Talat award Ibn Rashid with the honorific title of Rumeli Beylerbeyliği in return for his service in Medain Salih. However, Talat and Enver were opposed to this proposal on account of the fact that his rival Ibn Saud had been named vizier, and they proposed instead to award him with the same title. In addition, the government sent a delegate to Medain Salih to express its appreciation for Ibn Rashid's actions there.⁹⁷

The resettlement in Medain Salih, however, also increased the problems between Ibn Rashid and his tribe. His connection with his people was interrupted because of the long distance between Hail and Medain Salih. The conjunction of provisioning difficulties and the problem of distance weakened his authority among his people. Ibn Rashid managed to solve these problems with Ottoman gold, which was the only solution for tribal dissatisfaction in the region at that time.⁹⁸

In the middle of July 1918, Ibn Rashid returned to Hail. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, he was sent to Medain Salih to struggle against the tribes that had sided with Sharif Hussein. However, after a while the Ottoman government began to suspect an alliance between Ibn Rashid and Great Britain. Therefore, the government did not send guns and ammunition to Medain Salih, though they were necessary for Ibn Rashid to continue his

efforts. When he insisted on staying in Medain Salih, he became even more suspicious in the eyes of the government. The Ottoman officials in Damascus took drastic measures to force him to return to Hail, starving him in Medain Salih by preventing the transfer of foodstuffs to him. As a result, he had to return to Hail.⁹⁹

While he was on bad terms with the Ottoman government, Ibn Rashid approached the Germans, though he maintained his ties with the Ottoman Empire. In June 1918, he asked the German officials in Syria whether they could help him establish a wireless station in Hail behind the back of the Ottoman authorities. He made this request in the hopes of getting more trustworthy information from German sources regarding the course of the war, bypassing the Ottoman censors.¹⁰⁰ The German local officials were warm to this request since it would also help them stay informed about events in the region. In addition, asserting German influence over Ibn Rashid would make a considerable contribution to the Germans' efforts against the British.¹⁰¹ However, the German central government found the proposal of the German officials in Syria "fantastic," and refused it on the grounds that it would cause irreparable tensions between the two empires.¹⁰²

By the same token, Ibn Rashid, via his representative general Reshid Pasha, invited Emile Sprotte, who was working as the German headteacher at the *sultani* school in Damascus, to come into his service to teach European science to his sons and the prominent notables of his tribes in Hail. Emile Sprotte was inclined to accept this offer, since his prospective students would spread German influence by learning the German language and becoming acquainted with Germany. In a similar way, Ibn Rashid had taken into his service another German (Fritz Görner) working on the Damascus tramway operation as a technical employee, tasking him with installing electrical lighting equipment in Hail. The Ottoman authorities were aware of the project, but they were not informed that it was being facilitated by a German.¹⁰³

Berlin had a positive attitude toward the education project, as Emile Sprotte could function there as a German agent, providing direct information about Ibn Rashid and the tribes in the region.¹⁰⁴ However, local German officials warned those in the capital that Emile Sprotte was not suited to this work. It was explained that Sprotte could not send reports giving exact information about the region because of his character. Thus, this project was also abandoned.¹⁰⁵ A lack of time made it impossible for any other project to be contemplated. As a result, Ibn Rashid remained loyal to the Ottoman government until the very end of the war, which would ultimately mark his downfall.¹⁰⁶

Immediately after the sharifian revolt, upon learning of rumors that Nuri Shalaan and his son had sided with the sharif, the leader of the Ruela tribe sent a letter to Cemal Pasha declaring the sharif as his enemy as well as renewing his oath of allegiance to the caliph.¹⁰⁷ After this, Nuri visited Cemal Pasha in Damascus with his son upon Cemal's request and handed over a letter from Sharif Hussein inviting him to join the struggle against the

Ottoman Empire. In response, Cemal Pasha rewarded Nuri and Nawwaf with gold and decorations¹⁰⁸ and requested that a brigade of 300 men under his command or that of his son to be employed in the service of the government. In this way, he aimed to secure the loyalty of the Ruela tribe, keeping its leader or his son in Damascus as a "hostage." With this goal in mind, Nuri himself was appointed as an Ottoman officer.¹⁰⁹

After his return, although he sometimes had contact with the sharifians and the British,¹¹⁰ Nuri maintained his pro-Ottoman attitude. During his stay in Damascus, his son Nawwaf was assigned by Cemal Pasha to protect and clear the Hijaz Railroad in the south of Maan as a result of the increasing raids of pro-sharif Bedouins interrupting the railroad connection with Medina. He was promised that if he performed this task both he and his son would be honored with the title of pasha.¹¹¹

Approximately two weeks before the fall of Damascus, it became clear to the Ottoman government that Nuri Shalaan had changed sides and thrown in his lot with the sharif, although he did not give any active support to him. The reason behind his defection was primarily economic. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, toward the end of 1917 he requested from the Ottoman government a dispatch of 10,000 chift (350.000 kg.) of cereals and demanded the increase of his subvention from 3,000¹¹² to 6,000 ltq. in gold. The government skirted his demands and, therefore, he went to Great Britain for help. In the process of the negotiations, the British paid Nuri 70,000 sterling in gold and 3,000 rifles and recognized his independence in Djof. In return, Nuri was won over to the British side.¹¹³ The worsening situation of the Ottoman military effort in Palestine and Iraq must be added as another factor behind Nuri's change of attitude. After the capture of Baghdad, it became difficult for the Ruela tribe to secure food using the Mesopotamian line for their caravans, and the capture of Palestine likely put him in an even more difficult situation.¹¹⁴

Another critical figure in Arabia was Ibn Saud. In a recent study of the abolition of the caliphate by Nurullah Ardiç, it is claimed that Ibn Saud was "the greatest ally" of Great Britain.¹¹⁵ However, a comparison of the Ottoman documents with those of the British will make it clear that, rather than a loyal supporter of British policies, Ibn Saud attempted to reach a balance between the Ottomans and the British. Following the sharifian revolt, Ibn Saud continued his neutral attitude. Immediately after the outbreak of the sharifian revolt, he sent one of his relatives to Cemal Pasha to declare his loyalty.¹¹⁶ Following that, according to the British reports, he made a visible show of hostility to the Ottoman Empire by arresting their emissary and handing over 700 camels bought by himself to a British agent.¹¹⁷ Immediately after this event, Ibn Saud sent one of his close relatives, called Sheikh Abbas (al-Falaji), to Damascus to assure Cemal Pasha that his leader had no treaty with Great Britain, and did not intend to become an ally of Britain.¹¹⁸ To the British officials, on the other hand, he claimed that he had to escape from Damascus because of the news of the capture of the caravans.¹¹⁹ Meanwhile,

the German and Austrian consuls in Damascus reported that Cemal Pasha bid farewell to Sheikh Abbas with great honor.¹²⁰ Ibn Saud explained to the Ottoman officials that such incidents occurred as a result of the misconduct of some members of his tribe and the provocation of British officials, thereby he restored the Ottoman government's trust.¹²¹ Taking the negotiations between the sharif, Great Britain, and Ibn Saud into consideration, the action itself was presumably an attempt to convince the British government that Ibn Saud sided with them in the war and thereby to prevent any British endeavor favoring the sharif in the region that would disadvantage Ibn Saud. Similarly, he facilitated the passage of the Ottoman caravans through his region, believing that an Ottoman policy favoring Ibn Rashid would put the ruler of Najd in a difficult situation in his struggle with the ruler of Hail.¹²² The statements of the British officials also show that they were in doubt about the real loyalties of Ibn Saud. They conveyed Ibn Saud's remarks regarding his correspondence with Ibn Rashid on the restoration of peace between them, in which he claimed to have convinced Ibn Rashid to change his side, with some skepticism.¹²³

After the failure of the British project to rally all the tribal dynasties, including the Rashidis, around Sharif Hussein against the Ottoman caliphate,¹²⁴ the British government made a concerted effort to convince Ibn Saud to attack Hail, the capital of Ibn Rashid, since the latter, according to the British reports, had moved toward Medina to operate against the sharif's troops.¹²⁵ To this end, in October 1917 the British official Ronald Storrs was sent to Ibn Saud with the proposal for a military mission.¹²⁶

On this issue, Ibn Saud faced a dilemma between the danger of becoming a vassal of the sharif by losing British support¹²⁷ and active aggression against the Ottoman government, which he had always avoided throughout the war. He denied the British request, claiming that it would not be possible "to capture Hail by coup-de-main, weak though Ibn Rashid is, because one suburb of Hail has been strongly fortified and garrisoned by Turks."¹²⁸ Later, the British officials would be informed that there were no Turkish troops in Hail.¹²⁹ Ibn Saud's good fortune helped him again on this issue, as the British government had by then abandoned the project of capturing Hail for the sake of the power balance in Arabia between Ibn Saud and Sharif Hussein.¹³⁰

Ibn Saud did not entirely sever his relations with the Ottoman government even toward the very end of the war. Immediately after the fall of Jerusalem, on 16 December 1917, Tahsin Bey, the governor of Syria, reported that Ibn Saud was maintaining his loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.¹³¹ Similarly, in May 1918, the government came to an agreement with Ibn Saud with a view to establishing communications between Sanaa and Medina via Najd and a channel for the transfer of large monetary sums from Constantinople. The Ottoman government had also ratified the treaty.¹³² After that no visible hostility emerged between the Ottoman government and the governor of Najd as a result of Ibn Saud's skillful balancing act. Thus, the Ottoman era in

Arabia came to a close without any serious hostility between the Ottoman Empire and their governor and commander in Najd.

Another strategic group among the Bedouin tribes was those who were distributed along the Hijaz Railroad and the Bedouins of Hauran. In this regard, Cemal Pasha called the chiefs of the Huweitat, Beni Atije, and Fukara, who were salaried by the Ottoman government, to Damascus, and gave them gifts and gold in return for a renewed declaration of their loyalties. In addition, they were assigned to the protection of the railroads.¹³³

With the advance of Faysal's troops northward, in the middle of 1917 the attitude of these tribes became "worthy of anxiety" for the Ottoman authorities.¹³⁴ The Huweitat and Beli tribes in these regions were divided among themselves regarding their side in the battle between the Ottoman government and the sharif's troops. While Abu Taye, the chief of the former, supported the sharif, his rival inside the tribe, Ibn Djazi, stayed loyal to the government. Similarly, Suleiman Pasha, the leader of the Beli tribe, remained faithful to the Ottoman side, while his son took sides along with the majority of the tribe.¹³⁵ On the other hand, the Beni Sakhr and Beni Sarwiye tribes, stayed with the Ottoman side.¹³⁶

The increase of the propaganda activities of the sharif's men Sharif Nasir and Aude Abu Taye, the leader of Huweitat tribe, compelled the government to take military precautions to prevent any further penetration. In this regard, the Ottoman authorities kept an *ester-süvar* division (a division of camels) in Amman as well as dispatching some troops to the center of Hauran and increasing the number of Circassian volunteers serving in the region.¹³⁷ However, these measures did not suffice for removing the sharif's influence among the Bedouins. The tribes aligned with the sharif were continuously attacking the Hijaz Railroad to cut the Ottoman connection with Medina.¹³⁸ Consequently, Mehmed Cemal Pasha, the commander of the 8th Army Corps, was instructed to fight against these tribes. He would create railroad protection squadrons from among the pro-Ottoman tribes in the region. In addition, to support his position, Cemal Pasha demanded extra troops from Enver Pasha.¹³⁹

Cemal Pasha waged a successful military struggle against the sharif's troops. However, both the worsening situation of the Ottoman economy in Syria due to the famine and the advance of the British troops in Sinai and Iraq changed the picture, to some extent, to the detriment of the Ottoman side. Moreover, the smaller Bedouin tribes were more dissatisfied with the government's policy of conscription and requisitioning, though the larger ones were able to avoid them.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, until the very last moment many smaller tribes remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire, fighting actively alongside the Ottoman troops.¹⁴¹ By September 1918, parallel to the weakening authority of the Ottoman state, many of the smaller tribes in the east and south of the Dead Sea had been won over by the sharif with the military and financial help of Great Britain.¹⁴² It is reasonable to conclude from the above that, in the hostility between the British and Ottoman troops in

southern Palestine the tribes were divided between the two sides. While support for the British increased parallel to their military success, loyalty to the Ottoman rule was not abandoned until the last moment.

Notes

- 1 For a detailed analysis of the Ottoman policy of centralization toward the Bedouin and the Druze of Syria in the Tanzimat era, see: Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform*. For an analysis of the Ottoman policy on the Bedouin tribes from 1850 to the end of Ottoman rule in the case of Transjordan, see: Eugene L. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1850–1921*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; Abdulhamid II endeavored to increase the loyalty of the Bedouin tribes through education. For that purpose, he opened a school called Aşiret Mektebi for them. For an analysis of this school, see: Eugene L. Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes (1892–1907)," *IJMES*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 1996, pp. 83–107.
- 2 Abu-Izzeddin, Nejla M., *The Druzes: A New Study of Their History, Faith and Society*, Leiden: Brill, 1984, p. 1; for further information about the Druze religion also see: D.G. Hogarth and Gertrude L. Bell, *Note on Druses*, Cairo: Government Press, 1918, pp. 2–8.
- 3 Abu-Izzeddin, *The Druzes*, p. 3. The Druze were distributed into three isolated groups, of which the most numerous inhabits Jebel Druze, east of Jordan (about 55,000); the second, the towns of Shuf and Ment in Lebanon (about 50,000); the third, the towns of Hasbeya, Rasheya, Wadi al-Ajem, Homs, Hamadiyah, and Salimiyah in Anti-Lebanon and Hermon (about 45,000). For details see: Hogarth and Bell, *Note on Druses*, p. 1.
- 4 TNA, FO 371/2143, Cumberbatch to Mallet, Beirut, 15 September 1914.
- 5 BOA, DH.EUM 4.Şb 1/4, Bekir Sami to Talat, 20 Ağustos 1330 (2 September 1914).
- 6 PA-AA, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918.
- 7 PA-AA, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918.
- 8 Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 141; PA-AA, Türkiye 177, Bd. 16, Oppenheim to Göppert, 12 December 1917.
- 9 HHSa, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 10 August 1914.
- 10 HHSa, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 18 August 1914; TNA, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting intelligence returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916; Hogarth and Bell, *Note on Druses*, pp. 17–19.
- 11 BOA, DH.EUM.EMN 91/19, Hulusi to Talat, Damascus, 12 Ağustos 1330 (25 August 1914).
- 12 HHSa, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 3 September 1914. According to Hogarth and Bell, the Ottoman government were prone to believing every report about the rising of the Druze: Hogarth and Bell, *Note on Druses*, p. 21.
- 13 TNA, FO 195/2460, Cumberbatch to Mallet, Damascus, 10 September 1914; HHSa, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 10 September 1914.
- 14 TNA, FO 195/2460, Cumberbatch to Mallet, Damascus, 10 September 1914.
- 15 The English version of Cemal's memoirs does not include a section on the Druze. For further information about his evaluations of the Druzes see the Turkish version: Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, pp. 177–180.
- 16 BOA, DH.ŞFR 515/14, Cemal to Talat, 15 Mart 1332 (28 March 1916); HHSa, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 15 February 1915; PA-AA, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918. However, Cemal Pasha denies his intention of using the Druze militarily and states that he never considered using them as a military force. For further information see: Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 177.

- 17 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 6 February 1915.
- 18 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 15 February 1915.
- 19 Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 46.
- 20 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 15 August 1916.
- 21 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 528/52, Cemal to Talat, 30 Temmuz 1332 (11 August 1916).
- 22 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 528/52, Cemal to Talat, 30 Temmuz 1332 (11 August 1916).
- 23 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 558/50, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 28 Haziran 1333 (28 June 1917).
- 24 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 1 November 1916; **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 6 June 1918; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 528/64, Cemal to Talat, 21 Temmuz 1332 (3 August 1916).
- 25 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 557/92, Tahsin to Talat, Beirut, 22 Haziran 1333 (22 June 1917).
- 26 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 41, Waldburg to AA (transmitting consul Damascus), Constantinople, 20 July 1917.
- 27 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 6 June 1918.
- 28 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 6 June 1918.
- 29 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3215, Ds. 19, Fih. 1, Cemal (Mersinli) to Cemal, 27 Kanun-i Evvel 1333 (27 December 1917); **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 18, Brode to Bernstoff, Damascus, 22 August 1918.
- 30 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 596/3, İsmail Hakkı to Ministry of Interior, Beirut, 21 Eylül 1334 (21 September 1918).
- 31 Liman von Sanders, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, Berlin: Verlag von August Sherl, 1920, p. 363.
- 32 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 596/47, Rifat to Ministry of Interior, Damascus, 24 Eylül 1334 (24 September 1918); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 597/9, Tahsin to Ministry of Interior, Aleppo, 1 Teşrin-i Evvel 1334 (1 October 1918).
- 33 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918.
- 34 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 16, Oppenheim to Göppert, 12 December 1917; **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918.
- 35 Hogarth and Bell, *Note on Druses*, p. 19.
- 36 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918.
- 37 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 17 May 1918.
- 38 For a detailed analysis of the Ottoman activities to settle and control these tribal groups see; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*.
- 39 **TNA**, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting intelligence returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916.
- 40 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 6 February 1915; Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, pp. 140–141.
- 41 Cemal Pasha's insistent requests that Sharif Hussein send a division under the command of his son Faysal to join the Canal Expedition were based on his intention to keep Faysal as a hostage in Damascus to secure the sharif's loyalty: **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 10 June 1916. Similarly, after the outbreak of the sharifian revolt, Cemal asked Nuri Shalaan to send a brigade of 300 men to the service of the government to prevent him from joining Sharif Hussein; **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 7 August 1916. The Druze brigade in the army was employed to honor them and increase their loyalty; **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 6 February 1915.
- 42 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 177, Bd. 17, Mutius to Hertling, Beirut, 20 December 1917.
- 43 For an analysis of the Turkish perception of the sharif's revolt, see: M. Talha Çiçek, "Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Ders Kitapları Çerçevesinde Türk-Ulus Kimliği İnşası ve 'Arap ihaneti'," *Divan*, Vol. 17, No. 32, 2012, pp. 169–188.
- 44 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 159, Ds. 705/23, Zeki to Başkumandanlık Ministry, Damascus, 1 Eylül 1330 (14 September 1914); **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 159, Ds. 705, Fih. 23, Zeki to Başkumandanlık Ministry, Damascus, 1 Eylül 1330 (14 September 1914); **MAEE**, Guerre 1914–1918, 868/Turquie, Syrie et Palestine, Maucops to MAE, 28 September 1914.

- 45 **HHStA**, PA 38/363, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 10 September 1914.
- 46 For example, the tribes located along the Hijaz Railroad in northwestern Arabia – Huweitat, Beni Atije, and Fukara – were paid 10,000 Itq. in gold by August 1916 in return for their loyalty. For details see: **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 7 August 1916; similarly, Nuri Shalaan, chief of one of the largest tribes of northern Syria, was paid 3,000 Itq. in gold yearly; **BOA**, DH.EUM 2.Şb 32/27, Enver to Dahiliye, 30 Kanun-ı Sani 1332; **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 13 September 1918.
- 47 **TNA**, FO 371/2140, Chatham to Grey, Cairo, 6 September 1914.
- 48 **TNA**, FO 371/2480, McMahon to FO, Paris, 31 December 1914; **TNA**, FO 371/2480, Holderness to FO, London, 15 January 1915.
- 49 **TNA**, FO 371/3389, Wingate to FO, Cairo, 17 January 1918.
- 50 This document was captured by the British forces invading Basra. An English translation of this agreement is available at **TNA**, FO 371/2769, Holderness to FO, Basra, 22 November 1916; for the details of the negotiations between the Ottoman officials in the region and Ibn Saud and the Arabic version of the treaty see: **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 1714, Ds. 36, Fih. 1–72, Ömer Fevzi to War Ministry, Basra, 22 Nisan 1330 (5 May 1914); **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 1714, Ds. 36, Fih. 1–134, Refik (engineer in Medain Salih) to Captain Aziz Bey, Medain Salih, 11 Mayıs 1330 (24 May 1914); **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 1714, Ds. 36, Fih. 1–103, Captain Aziz Bey to War Ministry, Medain Salih, 30 Nisan 1330 (13 May 1914); **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 1714, Ds. 36, Fih. 1–72, Ömer Fevzi to War Ministry, Basra, 26 Kanun-ı Sani 1329 (8 February 1914).
- 51 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih. 4–20, 4th Army to Enver, 5 Şubat 1330 (18 February 1915).
- 52 Bin Saud defended a methodology that emphasized the literal interpretation of religious texts, and a return to the early tradition of the pious companions of the Prophet Muhammad, and which regarded most Ottoman religious practices as *Bid'a* (innovations) illegitimately added to the religion after the death of the Prophet. Therefore, there was tension between him and the government. For further details see: Madawi Al-Rasheed, *Contesting the Saudi State: New Voices from a New Generation*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 2–3.
- 53 **TNA**, FO 371/2140, Ryan to Mallet, Cairo, 22 September 1914.
- 54 For an example of it, see: **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih. 4–39, 4–40, Ibn Rashid to Cemal, 15 Rebiülahir 1333 (2 March 1915); in another letter to Enver Pasha, Ibn Rashid wrote that “he and his goods belongs to the state,” i.e., the Ottoman Empire: **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih. 8, Ibn Rashid to Enver, 25 Eylül 1330 (8 October 1914).
- 55 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 159, Ds. 703, Fih. 4–1, Zeki to Enver, Damascus, 10 Ağustos 1330 (24 August 1914).
- 56 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 26 July 1915.
- 57 Toward the end of 1917 he began to approach Sharif Faysal. For details see: **TNA**, WO 158/634, Arbur to General Bagdad, Cairo, 1 October 1917; **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3208, Ds. 18, Fih. 28, Yıldırım to Enver, 22 Ağustos 1333 (22 August 1333). About one month before the end of the battles, he took sides with Faysal; **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 13 September 1918.
- 58 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih. 3–8, War Ministry to 4th Army, 12 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (25 October 1914); **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih. 1–13, Major Aziz Bey to War Ministry, Medain Salih, 25 Eylül 1330 (8 October 1914).
- 59 **TNA**, FO 371/3389, Wingate to FO, Cairo, 17 January 1918.
- 60 In the viewpoint of the governor, Ibn Rashid was too young to rule the Rashidi dynasty, and therefore all his administrative works were carried out by his vizier, Ibn Subhan. The vizier began to have the potential rivals of Ibn Rashid killed to

- consolidate his authority over the tribe. Therefore, some members of the family took refuge with Ibn Saud to save themselves. The reason for this fighting was the struggle of Ibn Subhan to secure his authority. For further details see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 461/55, Hulusi to Talat, 1 Şubat 1330 (14 February 1915)
- 61 **TNA**, FO 371/3057, Ibn Rashid to Ibn Saud, Hail, 7 May 1917.
- 62 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 37, Prüfer to Bethmann-Hollweg, Jerusalem, 24 February 1915.
- 63 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih. 4–20, 4th Army to Enver, 5 Şubat 1330 (18 February 1915).
- 64 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 489/29, Basri to Talat, Medine, 3 Eylül 1331 (16 September 1915).
- 65 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR, Basri to Talat, Medine, 23 Ağustos 1331 (5 September 1915).
- 66 **TNA**, FO 371/3389, Wingate to FO, Cairo, 17 January 1918; **TNA**, FO 371/3047, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to FO, Basra, 27 November 1916; **TNA**, FO 371/2479, General Force “D” to General Officer Commanding, Egypt, Basra, 20 December 1915.
- 67 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih. 3–8, War Ministry to 4th Army, 12 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (25 October 1914); **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih.4–5, 4th Army to Enver, 13 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (26 October 1914).
- 68 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 37, Ranzi to AA, 10 April 1915: The Austrian consul in Damascus, Dr. Ranzi, sent the report to the German Foreign Ministry. He claimed that the government aimed at securing the cooperation of these two chiefs against Great Britain in the Mesopotamian war theater: **HHStA**, PA38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 5 June 1915.
- 69 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 459/43, Basri to Talat, 14 Kanun-ı Sani 1330 (27 February 1915).
- 70 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 6, Ds. 32, Fih. 4–38, Enver to Cemal, 4 Mart 1331 (17 March 1915).
- 71 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 5 June 1915.
- 72 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 21 July 1915.
- 73 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 489/29, Basri to Talat, Medine, 3 Eylül 1915 (15 September 1915).
- 74 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 6 February 1915.
- 75 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 21 July 1915.
- 76 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 26 July 1915.
- 77 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 29 October 1915; for a reference to Nuri as the *kaymakam* of Djof, see: **BOA**, İ.DUİT 66/48, 22 Ağustos 1332 (4 September 1916).
- 78 Although some small examples of cooperation between Ibn Saud and Great Britain took place, they never turned into open hostility or rebellion against the Ottoman government. When his suspicious actions were revealed, the Ottoman authorities sent him money and decorations to keep him loyal to the Ottoman side: **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Hesse to Bethmann-Hollweg, Baghdad, 21 June 1916.
- 79 **TNA**, FO 371/2140, Ryan to Mallet, Cairo 22 September 1914. When the British reports on Ibn Saud’s relations with the Ottomans are surveyed, it can be inferred that he was a loyal supporter of British policies in the region and filled with great hatred of Ottoman authority. However, when the Ottoman documents are studied the picture changes, and it becomes clear that his behavior toward the British authorities was part of his attempt to maintain a balance between the two sides. For an example of such documents see: **TNA**, FO 371/3047, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to FO, Basra, 27 November 1916; for an example of his efforts to approach the Ottoman government see: **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3215, Ds. 42, Fih. 3, Abdülhamid to Cemal, 9 December 1917.
- 80 Even after the fall of Jerusalem, with the fear of a defeat by Ibn Rashid with the support of the Ottoman government, Ibn Saud planned to offer that the government permit the transportation of foodstuffs to Damascus via El-Usaym. See: **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3215, Ds. 42, Fih. 3, Abdülhamid to Cemal, 9 December 1917.

- 81 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 December 1916.
- 82 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 159, Ds. 705, Fih. 7-2, Enver to the Yemen governorate, 7 Ağustos 1330 (20 August 1914); **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 1793, Ds. 287, Fih. 1-47, Enver Pasha to Idrisi, undated; **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 1793, Ds. 287, Fih. 1-47, Enver Pasha to Idrisi, undated.
- 83 Mubarak al-Sabah more or less desired the protection of the British government, most likely out of fear of the destructive effect of Ottoman centralization policies on tribal structures: **TNA**, FO 371/2483, Grey to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, 6 January 1915.
- 84 **TNA**, FO 371/2486, Grey to India Office, 8 November 1915.
- 85 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 159, Ds. 705, Fih. 30-35, the Chief of Veled-i Ali tribe to Ministry of Interior, 10 Zilkade 1330 (133?) (30 September 1914). Most of the tribes between Akaba and Mecca were loyal to the imperial authority: **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 37, Moritz to AA, Damascus, 16 January 1915. In the beginning of the war, Mahmud Nedim Bey, the governor of Yemen, managed to obtain the support of many of tribes for the Ottoman cause, and complained about the lack of enough money to make all of Yemen loyal to the government: **BOA**, DH. ŞFR 462/27, Mahmud Nedim to Talat, 7 Şubat 1330 (20 February 1915).
- 86 For an analysis of the sharif's attempts to form alliances with tribal groups see: Teitelbaum, *Rise and Fall*, pp. 76-115; Kostiner, Joseph, "The Hashemite 'Tribal Confederacy' of the Arab Revolt, 1916-17," in Edward Ingram (ed.), *National and International Politics in the Middle East: Essays in Honor of Elie Kedourie*, London: Frank Cass, 1986, pp. 126-143.
- 87 For further information about the British attempts in this direction see: **TNA**, FO 371/2480, Clayton to Grey, Cairo, 3 January 1915; for the discussions of the British officials regarding the issue of the Arab caliphate, see: **TNA**, FO 371/2482, Grey to McMahon, London, 14 April 1915; **TNA**, FO 371/2480, Holderness to FO, London, 15 January 1915.
- 88 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 25 September 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, From Grobba to AA, Jerusalem, 23 July 1917; **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 22 August 1917.
- 89 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 559/86, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 16 Temmuz 1333 (16 July 1917); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR. 565/88, Azmi to Talat, 16 Eylül 1333 (16 September 1917); **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 7/39, Azmi to Talat, 20 Temmuz 1332 (2 August 1916).
- 90 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 December 1916; Enver sent 20,000 ltq. in gold to Ibn Rashid. But in the document it is not explained whether this money was sent for an operation against the sharif. It is equally possible that this sum was dispatched in return for Ibn Rashid's loyalty: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 11/149, Enver to Cemal, 16 Temmuz 1916 (29 July 1916).
- 91 However, the document does not explain why the artillery was sent. It could have been for Ibn Rashid's self-defense; **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 12/143, Enver to Cemal, 18 Haziran 1332 (1 July 1916).
- 92 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 11/132, Enver to Cemal, 30 Mayıs 1332 (11 June 1916); **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 December 1916.
- 93 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 42, Greenberg to Michaelis, Damascus, 20 October 1917.
- 94 **TNA**, FO 371/3057, Cox to FO, Basra, 13 June 1917.
- 95 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 42, Greenberg to Michaelis, Damascus, 20 October 1917.
- 96 **TNA**, FO 371/3059, Fahaid al-Rashid to Chief Political Officer in Baghdad, Baghdad, 23 June 1917.
- 97 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 9 October 1917; **BOA**, DH. KMS 44-1/20, Cemal to Talat, undated; Talat to Cemal, 5 Eylül 1333 (5 September 1917).
- 98 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 42, Greenberg to Hertling, Damascus, 31 January 1918.

- 99 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 16 July 1918. When Baghdad fell into British hands some portions of his tribes had been reported to lean to their side: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 74/280, Talat to Halil, 28 Mart 1333 (28 March 1917). When Ibn Rashid arrived at Medain Salih, he sent telegrams to Enver, Talat, and Cemal via Ali Haidar from Medina. The answer was an attempt to divert him: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 79/227, Ali Haidar to Talat, 22 Ağustos 1333 (22 August 1917).
- 100 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 42, Schröder to AA, 14 June 1918.
- 101 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 42, Neufeld to AA, Damascus, 15 June 1918.
- 102 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 42, political section of the General Staff in Berlin to the Ambassador in Constantinople, Berlin, 15 July 1918.
- 103 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 42, Schröder to AA, 14 June 1918.
- 104 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 42, political section of the General Staff in Berlin to the ambassador in Constantinople, Berlin, 15 July 1918.
- 105 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 43, Prüfer to German Ambassador in Pera, Constantinople, 15 July 1918.
- 106 His city Hail would be captured by Ibn Saud with the British permission. For details see: Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis: The Rashidis of Saudia Arabia*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1991.
- 107 **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 39, Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting consul Damascus), Constantinople, 2 August 1916.
- 108 He and his son were awarded with the 4th degree Ottoman Medal (Dördüncü Rütbe Osman): **BOA**, DH.KMS 41/43, Talat to Said Halim, 18 Ağustos 1332 (31 August 1916).
- 109 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 7 August 1916; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 557/38, Tahsin to Talat, 16 Haziran 1333 (16 June 1917).
- 110 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 557/92, Tahsin to Talat, 22 Haziran 1333 (22 June 1917).
- 111 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 23 June 1917; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 557/38, Tahsin to Talat, 2 Temmuz 1333 (2 July 1917). Cemal Pasha wrote to Enver on 20 November that he assigned Nawwaf Shalaan for the protection of the Hijaz Railroad. It can be inferred that Nawwaf's task was renewed at that time. **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 7/126, Cemal to Enver, 20 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (20 November 1917).
- 112 For the payment of his salary as 3,000 ltq. for 1917, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 2.Şb 32/27, Enver to Dahiliye, 30 Kanun-ı Sani 1332 (13 February 1917); for the decision to pay Nuri a salary in the beginning of the war, see: **BOA**, DH.İ.U.M 6/E-5, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Syria, 15 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (28 November 1914).
- 113 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus 13 September 1918. In February 1918, his salary was paid by the Ottoman government; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 84/104, War Ministry to the governor of Syria, 19 Şubat 1334 (19 February 1918). On 2 July 1918, the Ottoman government paid 1.000 ltq. to Nuri. That shows that he was loyal to the Ottomans till that date; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 89/18, War Ministry to the governor of Syria, 2 Temmuz 1334 (2 July 1918).
- 114 **TNA**, WO 158/634, Arbur to General Bagdad, Cairo, 1 October 1917.
- 115 Ardiç, *İslam*, p. 200.
- 116 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 December 1916.
- 117 **TNA**, FO 371/3047, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to FO, Basra, 16 November 1916.
- 118 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 December 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 41, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 5 January 1917.
- 119 **TNA**, FO 371/3055, Cox to FO, Basra, [?] March 1917.
- 120 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 December 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkiye 165, Bd. 41, Loytved to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 5 January 1917.

- 121 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 38, Hesse to Bethmann-Hollweg, Baghdad, 21 June 1916.
- 122 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3215, Ds. 42, Fih. 3, Abdülhamid to Cemal, 9 December 1917.
- 123 **TNA**, FO 371/3055, Cox to FO, Basra, [?] March 1917; three months later, Sir Percy Cox, the British representative in Basra, was complaining about the contradictory reports of the Arab leaders: **TNA**, FO 371/3057, Cox to FO, Basra, 5 June 1917.
- 124 For details on the suggestions see: **TNA**, FO 371/3057, General, Basra to FO, Basra, 9 July 1916; for details on the reasons for the disagreement between the two chiefs: **TNA**, FO 371/3057, Cox to FO, Basra, 5 June 1917.
- 125 **TNA**, FO 371/3383, Cox to FO, Basra, 28 December 1917.
- 126 **TNA**, FO 371/3061, Wingate to FO, Cairo, 2 November 1917.
- 127 **TNA**, FO 371/3061, Cox to FO, Baghdad, 15 December 1917.
- 128 **TNA**, FO 371/3057, Cox to FO, Basra, 12 November 1917.
- 129 **TNA**, FO 371/3383, Basset to Arbur, Jeddah, 4 February 1918.
- 130 **TNA**, FO 371/3389, FO to Viceroy, 14 January 1918; **TNA**, FO 371/3389, Wingate to FO, Cairo, 7 January 1918.
- 131 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 573/117, Tahsin to Ministry of Interior, Damascus, 16 Kanun-ı Evvel 1333 (16 December 1917).
- 132 **TNA**, FO 371/3389, G.O.C. Aden to Wingate, Aden, 21 May 1918.
- 133 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 7 August 1916. The British reports also confirm these tribes' loyalty to the Ottoman government. For further information see: **TNA**, WO 158/626, Clayton to FO, 11 November 1916; **TNA**, WO 158/626, Graves to WO, 21 November 1916; for the medals given to the tribal chiefs see: **BOA**, DH.KMS 41/46, Talat to Said Halim, 27 Eylül 1916 (10 October 1916). In May 1917, some tribal chiefs were also awarded with various medals due to their allegiance to and active support for the Ottoman government: **BOA**, DH.KMS. 44-2/19, Talat to Said Halim, 12 Mayıs 1333 (12 May 1917).
- 134 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 557/92, Tahsin to Talat, 22 Haziran 1333 (22 June 1917).
- 135 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 2 August 1917.
- 136 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 557/92, Tahsin to Talat, 22 Haziran 1333 (22 June 1917).
- 137 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 557/92, Tahsin to Talat, 22 Haziran 1333 (22 June 1917).
- 138 In four weeks between the middle of September and October, the pro-British Bedouins were able to destroy the three best Ottoman locomotives with these attacks: **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 42, Greenberg to Michaelis, Damascus, 20 October 1917. Once, they derailed the train of Mersinli Cemal Pasha, the Commander of 8th Army Corps. For details see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 572/70, Tahsin to Talat. Damascus, 29 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (29 November 1917).
- 139 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 558/48, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 2 Temmuz 1333 (2 July 1917).
- 140 **TNA**, FO 371/2777, McMahon to FO (transmitting intelligence returned from Syria), Cairo, 20 May 1916.
- 141 Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, pp. 238–240.
- 142 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 7/49, Fahreddin to Enver, 29 Ağustos 1334 (29 August 1918); **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 13 September 1918.

7 War, famine, and epidemics

Famine was the most painful ordeal faced by the people of Syria in World War I. Hundreds of thousands of lives were lost either as a direct result of the famine or from other social disasters tied to it, such as epidemics, inflation, and the devaluation of paper money. Neither Cemal Pasha's rule of terror nor the battles that took place on the Sinai front were as influential in changing the attitude of the Syrians against the Ottoman Empire as famine and its consequences. Nor was any factor more decisive in the ultimate failure of Cemal's plans to increase Ottoman authority in Syria and conduct the behavior of the Syrians in accordance with the ideal of Ottoman unity in the Unionist sense. The impact of the starvation was so devastating in the region that, by the end of the war, total mortality from both starvation and epidemics reached 500,000.¹ The famine is also important for understanding the inefficacy of the modern tools used to create state control over the Syrian realm and the Syrian people. As will be detailed below, this incident shows us the aspect of Ottoman Syria that could not be "conducted" by modern state mechanisms or by Cemal's endeavors, along with his bureaucrats, to abolish these weaknesses to make the state stronger in the eyes of the Ottomans in Syria.

Like many Arab nationalists, George Antonius, in his acclaimed study on the development of Arab nationalism, accused the Ottomans of trading grains at high prices on the black market. In his viewpoint, the Lebanese were deliberately starved due to their sympathies with France.² Linda Schatkowski Schilcher, however, has demonstrated the Entente's responsibility in the miseries of the Syrians. She rightfully examined the role of the Entente's blockade in the deaths caused by starvation in Syria, in addition to the ineptitude of the Ottoman officials, who could not prevent abuse of the circumstances of war and who sometimes profited from these circumstances. The present study aims at widening Schilcher's analysis, relying primarily on Ottoman, Austrian, and German documents, and to examine the transformation of the Ottoman government in Syria under Cemal Pasha, taking famine as a case study. This chapter will try to demonstrate how the struggle against the famine and its consequences influenced the process of turning the Syrians into ideal Ottomans. Similarly, the process of struggling against the destructive impact of the

famine and its results, such as epidemics, also paved the way for the consolidation of the government's control over the bodies of the Syrian people. All in all, apart from its destructive impact on the different peoples of Syria, the famine is an ideal case study for observing the nature of the new rule established in Syria with the beginning of the war and the inability of this regime to determine the order of things in the region.

Reasons behind the famine

The reasons behind the starvation that ruled over greater Syria throughout the war period and, implicitly, the question of who bore the responsibility for the deaths of such large numbers of people are still a matter of debate in the existing literature. In his memoirs, Cemal Pasha cites the sharifian revolt as the main factor preventing the provisioning of Syria. Cemal claims that, in spite of the destructive impact of a locust plague on the harvest in 1915, he had secured the necessary amount of food for the Syrian provinces before the outbreak of the revolt. But, with the commencement of the sharif's movement, Cemal had to dispatch Syria's grain to the Bedouin tribes to guarantee their allegiance to the empire's authority. Therefore, catastrophic starvation reigned over daily life in Syria. He also mentions the Entente's blockade as a factor behind the famine.³ On the other hand, the Entente states and some subsequent academic studies accused Cemal Pasha of punishing the pro-Entente components of Syrian society, as in the case of Lebanon. They claimed that Cemal Pasha deliberately starved Lebanon because of the pro-French tendencies that prevailed among its population.⁴

Schilcher's study, however, convincingly indicates the mutual responsibility of all sides – the Entente, the Ottomans, and the sharif – for the famine in Syria. She has analyzed in detail both the impact of the Entente's blockade and the Ottoman authorities' failures in handling the issue. Therefore, this section will only give a summary of the reasons behind the famine to complete the picture and point out some factors that were neglected in Schilcher's study, especially regarding the reasons behind the attitude adopted by the Ottoman authorities in dealing with the famine.

The endless requisitions of agricultural products and pack animals for the preparation of the expedition against Egypt can be cited as the first reason behind the scarcity of foodstuffs in Syria. In the pre-war years, the collection rights to the tithe were given out to tax-farmers by contract. In the war period, however, this work was taken over directly by the army. Presumably, the tax-farmers had managed some balance between the needs of the civilian population and those of the state. Based on the available sources, however, it is impossible to make such a claim for the army. Additionally, the army made further purchases from the market for its needs, sometimes forcing peasants to accept paper money and sometimes getting their consent by offering hard coin. All these factors caused a deep scarcity of food in Syria beginning in the second year of the war.⁵

Schilcher has dutifully analyzed these factors. However, she neglects the expedition against Egypt. This thoughtless requisitioning was largely due to the importance of the Egyptian expedition for Cemal in the beginning of the war. The Ottoman central government and its governor general in Syria, Cemal Pasha, attributed vital importance to the conquest of Egypt, and, therefore, all the human and material sources of Syria were mobilized for the realization of this goal with the beginning of the war in the European theaters. Secondly, the Ottoman authorities thought that the war would come to an end in a short span of time with a victory by the Central Powers. Therefore, the mobilization was conducted so thoughtlessly that, in the words of the British consul in Aleppo:

The country has been stripped of horses, mules, carts and, in a great measure, of food stores, and great mismanagement and was to have marked the ruthless and despotic requisition. More horses have been seized than could be fed, nor does there seem any probability of the great food supplies collected being so handled as to suffice for the needs of the regular troops for any length of time, not to speak of the Reserves. The Reservists at Aleppo are left to find food for themselves. The country may be said to be so denuded of men and of cereals as to leave little prospect of the land being sown this autumn.⁶

The situation was no different in the other towns of Syria. At the beginning of the mobilization, the American representative for Safad and Tiberius reported regarding the southern regions of geographical Syria that "the Government ordered the seizure of all the horses, then the commandeering of the stocks of barley, wheat, rice etc." The authorities also demanded money from the people in addition to seizing their camels. Furthermore, manufactured articles were forcibly requisitioned from merchants. As a final word, the consul wrote that "the natives and the foreigners" were "suffering from this state of tyranny and misery."⁷ In May 1915, the German consul in Beirut reported that there was no city in Syria being subjected to harsher requisitions than Beirut. He added that the government had requisitioned the cereals of the inland cities of Syria as well.⁸ The Ottoman government applied the same rules of requisitioning to the citizens of foreign states. The Ministry of Interior instructed the governor of Jerusalem that prior to commandeering pack animals from foreigners, the relevant consul should be invited to observe the process. If the consul did not arrive within 24 hours, then the state officials were authorized to seize the pack animals. If the pack animals were seen outside, the government officials were authorized to capture them, making a record of the breed of the animal.⁹

In reaction to these policies, at the beginning of the mobilization people moved their property that was at risk of requisition to Lebanon, which was then outside the area of effective government control. This was the beginning of the end for the autonomy of Lebanon. In response to repeated cables about

the situation from the governors of Syria and Beirut, the central government began to think about changing the status of Lebanon.¹⁰

Since the conquest of Egypt maintained its place as the top priority on Cemal's agenda in the first year of the war, this picture remained unchanged for the most part during 1915, with the needs of the civilian population kept in the background. All trains were put under the army's control to supply the troops with food. Without regard to the civilian population, most of the cereals were sent to the army stores. The governors of some cities even requested additional gendarmes in order to seize the harvest from the peasants.¹¹ In Beirut, the requisitioning was so severe that, in the first quarter of 1915, the city's resident went without bread for days.¹² Similarly, in some provinces, there was no seed for the year 1916.¹³ However, a good harvest in most provinces in 1915, excluding Palestine, where the grain was damaged by a locust plague, largely prevented disaster for that year.¹⁴

In the following years of war, the deterioration of the provisioning situation as a result of the impact of natural disasters such as locust plague and the east winds, as well as the spread of grain speculation, led Cemal to further impose his iron fist over the peasants to seize their products for military use and force them to sell their cereals for paper money. Those policies had a profoundly demoralizing effect on the peasants, who knew that they would, in the end, be unable to sell their grain on the free market.¹⁵

In addition, the recruitment of Syria's agricultural labor force into the military and the requisitioning of pack animals, which constituted the entire workforce for agriculture in Syria, contributed to a decrease in production. The impact of this labor shortage was so debilitating that, in September 1915, the Ottoman government had to send a telegram to the governorates requiring them to create labor battalions to carry out agriculture in the villages.¹⁶ Cemal Pasha immediately implemented this measure. According to the Austrian consul in Aleppo, these battalions helped open up fallow lands to agriculture.¹⁷ However, this was not enough to produce sufficient grain for Syria, or even for the army, in the following years.

In addition, most of the agricultural teachers who had been appointed to the towns to train farmers were recruited to perform their "civic duties" in the army. After providing a short description of the negative impact of conscription on agricultural production, the director for agricultural issues of the province of Syria (Suriye Vilayeti Ziraat Müdiri) complained at the end of 1916 that it was impossible, because of the conscription, to find graduates of the School of Agriculture to employ for the development of agriculture.¹⁸ As a result, most of the agricultural producers had to give up cultivating their lands.¹⁹ The only exception were the Druze of Hauran, who were exempt from all the suppressive measures of the government.²⁰ In addition, the Bedouin's fear of recruitment caused a considerable reduction in agricultural production. Following the proclamation of the mobilization, the smaller tribes fled to the inaccessible deserts, leaving their agricultural lands uncultivated, to escape from the recruitment.²¹

The increasing impact of the requisitions and natural disasters upon agricultural production was accompanied by a lack of transportation, which prevented the effective organization of food distribution. First, the requisitioning of all kinds of pack animals, such as draught animals, camels, horses, mules, and oxen, for the army's use made it almost impossible to transport grains from the agriculturally productive lands to the destitute regions. Secondly, the problems of railroad transportation resulting from a lack of coal prevented the transfer of food among the provinces.²² Before the war, the Syrian railroads had operated with imported coal. Following the commencement of the hostilities, the Entente's naval blockade hindered coal imports and the coal reserves in Syria were exhausted in a short span of time. Consequently, soon after the beginning of the war, the train, which had previously run two times a day, was reduced to running only two times each week.²³ Attempts to mine coal in Lebanon were ineffective.²⁴ Because of the lack of coal, in June 1915 railroad transportation had to be interrupted for a month in Syria. Afterwards, the services were maintained by using wood as fuel for the trains.²⁵ However, the number of services and the carrying capacity of the trains were considerably reduced. The available trains were also employed to provide the needs of the army.²⁶ Therefore, throughout the war period, supplying food to the starving population presented the government with an insurmountable problem.²⁷ The result was the creation of ideal conditions for speculation on cereals and, thus, a tremendous increase in food prices in greater Syria.

In addition to requisitioning, in April 1915 a locust plague in Palestine and the Hauran plateau further reduced the food supply in Syria. As a result of this disaster, vast amounts of grains and fruits in these places were destroyed.²⁸ In the words of Von Kress, the locusts had descended like a rain shower. The locust swarms flying in the air darkened the skies. Their impact was so terrible that not even a leaf remained on the trees. The plague had changed a green country into a desert in a matter of hours.²⁹ According to Cemal Pasha, the 1915 harvest barely yielded half the food of previous years.³⁰

Toward the end of 1916 Syria was struck by yet another natural disaster. The east winds did significant damage to the harvest of Hauran, the bread basket of Syria. The winds destroyed a quarter of the cereals there. As a result, according to the Austrian consul, the remaining grain could not even meet the needs of the army. Moreover, as Cemal correctly argued, the commencement of the sharifian revolt that year had a severe impact on the grain supply in Syria. Cemal Pasha had to dispatch large amounts of food to tribes in the region to secure their loyalties. Worst of all, the government failed to secure the harvest of the Druze, which meant a loss of 20,000 tons of cereals. Afterwards, the Druze sold their crops for exorbitant prices. Also, since the military requisitions did not leave the peasants even seeds, they resorted to hiding their harvests.³¹

The last, but not the least, factor that must be mentioned as a reason for the famine, stemming from the Ottoman government, was the ambiguous situation of paper money. Paper money was introduced into Syria after the

beginning of the war. In preceding years, the Ottoman government had circulated nickel coins and gold on the Syrian market. The bank notes that had been printed by the Ottoman Bank and accepted willingly in other regions of the empire were a rarity in Syria prior to the war.³²

Apart from its practical uses, paper money represents the prestige of a state among its citizens. If the state's paper money is not accepted as a medium of exchange, it means that the population does not trust the state. As a governor who worked ceaselessly to assert the Ottoman state's authority over Syria, Cemal did not hesitate to resort to harsh measures to ensure that the paper money was widely used. Although the hesitancy of the local population did not stem from mistrust of the state, Cemal's endeavors to promote the circulation of paper money should be seen as part of his activities to fortify the state's authority in Syria.

With the start of the war, the Ottoman government made a crucial decision for the economy of the region and put paper money into circulation for daily use, signing a guarantee contract with Germany. However, despite the severe measures taken by Cemal Pasha, which will be dealt with below, this currency did not meet with a warm reception by the local population, which was not accustomed to paper money. Even in the second year of circulation, sellers either did not accept payment in paper money or increased the price of products purchased with it.³³ The failure of the currency was even more striking among the Bedouin and the Druze in Hauran, who provided a significant portion of the provisioning for the region. They refused to accept payment in anything other than gold.³⁴ There were also differences among the hard currency; the coins issued in 1916 were called *çürük* (corrupt) and devalued because of the small proportion of silver they contained.³⁵ Even the state's own officials contributed to the process by collecting half of the taxes with hard coin.³⁶ Therefore, paper money remained depreciated throughout the war.

As for the Entente's responsibility in the deaths of thousands of people from starvation, the blockade implemented by the Entente states along the Syrian coasts from the beginning of the war played a pivotal role in the famine. The coastal cities, particularly those of Lebanon, were profoundly affected by the blockade, as their ports were the primary source of subsistence for the Lebanese. To a large extent, these cities subsisted on silkworm-breeding and international commerce, especially with Europe.³⁷ Furthermore, all transportation from the imperial center to these cities was conducted by sea. However, the initiation of the Entente's blockade immediately after the proclamation of hostilities ended commerce in these cities and prevented any access to food by sea.³⁸ The British and French deliberately used the famine as a weapon of war. Based on the British and French Archives, Elizabeth Thompson demonstrated that:

In May 1916, Maronite Archbishop Joseph Darien protested the use of famine for political ends, urging the French consul in Cairo to demand an immediate Entente invasion to save lives. Although the French had by

then received reports of up to 800,000 deaths, Foreign Minister Aristide Briand spurned the consul's pleas to invade, arguing that it would only provoke a general massacre. The consul then urged that France break the blockade and ship food to Lebanon. A June 2 British memo to the foreign ministry, however, flatly rejected the proposal to feed starving civilians: "His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs expresses his earnest hope that the French Government will not encourage any such scheme ... The Entente Allies are simply being blackmailed to remedy the shortage of supplies which it is the very intention of the blockade to produce." The British "consider the famine as an agent that will lead the Arabs to revolt."³⁹

Toward the end of the year 1916, the situation in Lebanon was so severe that, according to the calculations of Ali Münif Bey, the governor of Lebanon, the government's food subsidy for Lebanon that year corresponded to 4 kilograms of cereals per person monthly. He estimated at the end of the year that if the situation persisted, half of the population would die from starvation.⁴⁰ To address the problem to a certain extent, the Ottoman government suggested that the Lebanese grow cereals in their gardens, instead of breeding silkworms. However, the Lebanese did not accept this advice. Moreover, the interruption of railroad connections with Lebanon due to the lack of coal, along with the mountainous nature of its geography, prevented any government intervention in the starvation in Lebanon. The government made some attempts to supply grains to Lebanon. But these endeavors also failed due to the impact of speculation; the people had to buy cereals for a very high price.⁴¹ Furthermore, in the winter of 1915 to 1916, "a heavy snow blocked travel to Mount Lebanon."⁴²

In addition to their naval blockade, toward the end of the war, Great Britain blockaded the interior sections of Syria, preventing the flow of grain from Baghdad and the Persian Gulf following the fall of the former in March 1917. Before the capture of Baghdad, there had been a trade route between Baghdad and Damascus passing through the desert. However, shortly after the British invasion, this route was closed. The merchants then reached an agreement with the sheikh of Kuwait to purchase goods via Kuwait. However, upon considering the possible reaction of British officials if they were informed about this trade, the sheikh himself closed the route. The possibility of trade with Anatolia had already been closed with the beginning of the war. Thus, almost all trade routes were blocked between Syria and the outside world by Great Britain before its capture.⁴³

As for the responsibility of the Austrian and German officials posted in Syria and the sharif, Schilcher argues convincingly that

The German and Austrian officials posted in greater Syria were also culpable because they were ineffective in remedying a situation for which they were, at least partially, responsible. They reacted far too late, gave

lame excuses about the likely misinterpretation of political interference, refused to commit the necessary funds, and sustained the evil in fear of being blamed for its initiation. The Arab rebels themselves also share, at least indirectly, some of the responsibility. The Hashimites appear to have manipulated tribal allegiances through the food supply and to have condoned the Entente blockade of the parts of greater Syria which were still under Ottoman control. It was the diversion of grain southwards and the spread of British gold through the rebels which contributed to shortages and inflation in 1917 and 1918.⁴⁴

The measures of the Ottoman administration against starvation

As emphasized in the preceding chapters, increasing the prestige of the Ottoman state was one of Cemal Pasha's primary concerns in Syria. As will be shown below through the remarks of Ottoman officials under Cemal's rule in Syria, the inability of the Ottoman state to feed its own citizens posed a significant threat to its prestige in the eyes of the Syrian Ottomans. Thus, Cemal Pasha and his bureaucrats took all possible measures to remove this threat and established heavy punishments for those who did not obey the state's regulations for reducing the impact of the famine. In the beginning of 1916, Cemal Pasha took precautions to address the alarming situation of the food supply in Syria. First, he determined a maximum price for cereals, and decided to deliver a determined quantity of cereals *per diem* to the provincial capitals from the army stores, in addition to ordering their transportation under any circumstances, whether by train or other means. He decided to inflict heavy punishments on those who exceeded the maximum prices or who stockpiled cereals. Furthermore, he called on the governors of Beirut, Aleppo, Lebanon, Jerusalem, and Damascus to meet and discuss the famine. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, Cemal Pasha's energetic intervention had a calming effect on the local population.⁴⁵

As mentioned previously, the lack of transportation and the devaluation of paper money paved the way for speculation in grain, which created further disorder in Syria's economic life. At the end of the year 1915, Cemal Pasha abolished the prohibition on trade in cereals between the provinces with the aim of stopping further speculation and the possible delivery of cereals to the Entente fleet in the eastern Mediterranean. This decision went into force in the beginning of the same year. This was a common measure applied by the Ottoman authorities to stop speculation in times of crisis.⁴⁶ However, during the war, this measure actually contributed to speculation in cereals as a result of the cutting of the food supply from districts with grain surpluses to the starving regions.⁴⁷ Thus, Cemal Pasha was forced to withdraw his decision to ban exports and allow the free trade of grains between the provinces. He entrusted this right to private entrepreneurs and required that they transfer the grains by their own means because the railroad was being used for the

army.⁴⁸ However, with this liberalization of the grain trade, the people of Damascus suffered from a lack of bread for a number of days. Consequently, Cemal had to retreat from his decision and find another solution. He delegated responsibility for the grain trade to specific individuals chosen by the government. Thus, he would arrange the flow of cereals to the cities. He also limited the consumption of purchased bread with bread rationing cards and prohibited the production of fine-quality flour.⁴⁹

In the same year, in order to prevent speculation, the government first attempted to take control over the sale of cereals and prohibited the private purchase of grains directly from producers. This job was assigned to some selected individuals. They would buy the cereals and hand them over to the government, taking 6–10 percent in profit.⁵⁰ The peasants were forbidden to sell their products to anyone else. But a few months later the prohibitions had to be lifted. All restrictions on the sale of cereals were removed, except those regarding transportation. The merchants had to transport their goods themselves. This well-intended measure, however, totally failed and led to further speculation. The merchants bought grain from the peasants and sold it to people with hard coin. This required consumers to exchange their paper money for hard coin. As a result, the value of paper money was cut in value, while a scarcity of hard coin emerged.⁵¹ The government again had to return to its original practice. This change of system led to a 50 percent increase in the price of cereals, and the continuation of the requisitioning system caused the peasants to withhold their production.⁵²

Faced with the inadequacy of such measures to forestall grain speculation and the devaluation of the paper money and restore order to the economy, Cemal decided to implement his most radical action yet. After a meeting with the governors of the Syrian provinces on 24 April 1917, Cemal informed the *al-Sharq* newspaper that, beginning from 15 May 1917, the value of paper money would be made equal to the value of gold coin and, thus, the difference of currency between hard money and paper money would be resolved.⁵³ If the exchange difference persisted, Cemal would select a tenth of the administrators of the Ottoman and Deutsche Bank, the large merchants, the local notables, and those who dealt in foreign currency exchange and send them into exile in Anatolia. He threatened to repeat this procedure at the end of every sixth week until the currency was stabilized. He stressed in the announcement that this measure was aimed at protecting the poor.⁵⁴

Despite Cemal's warning, paper currency remained devalued and, as he had promised in his declaration, he randomly selected 21 notables and merchants for expulsion. He selected an equal number of exiles from each religion: seven Muslims, seven Christians, and seven Jews.⁵⁵ They were sent to Adana. However, this measure did not lead to any increase in the value of the paper money. Six months later, the policy was abandoned and all those who had been exiled because of the paper money issue were allowed to return their homes.⁵⁶ It is worth mentioning that Cemal's decision met with opposition among the local bureaucrats. According to a report from the German consul

in Jerusalem, the governor of Syria and his office chief suddenly went on holiday to avoid being associated with “that crazy policy of exile.” Similarly, the chief of police became worried about “the countless contradictory exile decisions.”⁵⁷ The governor of Beirut, Azmi Bey, also reported his opposition to this decision to Grand Vizier Talat Pasha.⁵⁸

In another attempt to improve provisioning, Cemal Pasha also demanded foodstuffs instead of money from those paying the exoneration tax (*bedel-i askeri*) to avoid service in the army.⁵⁹ Such individuals were required to pay 4,000 kilograms of wheat or 4,250 kilograms of barley, or a determined amount of potato, corn, lentil, pea, or millet.⁶⁰ They also had to transport these products to predetermined sites. This policy led to rapid growth in demand for these agricultural products and, consequently, their prices increased dramatically; a chift (33 kilograms) of wheat, for example, rose from 105 piasters to 140 piasters in a week, and the price of bread became unaffordable for the poor – from 20 piasters to 32 piasters per *okka* (equal to 1.2 grams). However, with this measure, the foodstuff needs of the country had been guaranteed for a month.⁶¹

The deterioration of the food supply system forced the government to take more radical measures. Upon the closure of the bakeries in Damascus because of a lack of flour, the Ottoman authorities decided to partially evacuate the city. To this end, the military and civil officials began to send their families from the city, which was being fed with the daily assistance of the government. To take the lead in this process, the governor sent his family out of the city. Following him many officials sent their families to different places in Anatolia, Constantinople being the first choice. The government also planned to send all non-native residents, which amounted to 60,000 people, out of Damascus to relieve the food crisis. As a last resort, the government decided to distribute the cereals that had been brought from Anatolia for the needs of the army.⁶²

The government also levied a tax, called the “Voluntary Poverty Tax” (*freiwillige armensteuer*), on the city’s wealthy residents to assist the poor people of Damascus. This law was implemented without the approval of the parliament, although this was contrary to existing legislation. According to the German consul in Damascus, favoritism became a problem in the collection of these taxes. While the wealthiest individual in Syria, Senator Abd al-Rahman Pasha al-Yusuf, was paying 3,500 liras, the Christian merchant who had worked as the honorary dragoman of Germany, was made to pay 5,000 liras. This calls to mind the inequities of the so-called Wealth Tax (*varlık vergisi*) imposed during the Republican period of modern Turkish history.⁶³ Those liable to pay this tax had to accept these arbitrary exactions out of fear of the government.⁶⁴ Similarly, the government sold some stock certificates to supply food for the poor people of Damascus, Beirut, and Aleppo.⁶⁵

One of the most interesting events in World War I was the process of foreign assistance to the starving people of Lebanon by way of the sea. In response to the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon, the Apostolic See⁶⁶

and the American government appealed to the Ottoman government for permission to help the starving Lebanese. The evaluations of the Ottoman authorities in the region and those of Cemal Pasha, as their superior, regarding the issue of foreign assistance to Lebanon make clear the centrality of a strong state in their minds. In the beginning, the Ottoman government refused the American government's offer of aid on the grounds that the organization of humanitarian assistance would enable the reintroduction of American missionaries to the Ottoman realm and also would open the way for American propaganda, while further weakening the image of the Ottoman state.⁶⁷ Later, however, the gravity of the situation in Lebanon forced them to accept the offers.

After that, according to the Ottoman documents, it seems that all the Ottoman officials in the region supported the American assistance to save the Lebanese from starvation.⁶⁸ However, the distribution of the grain led to disagreement among the Ottoman officials. The officials in Syria under Cemal's rule were concerned that the American assistance would be transformed into a propaganda opportunity for American missionaries, who had been checked to a considerable extent after the outbreak of the war. In this regard, both Azmi Bey, the governor of Beirut, and Ali Münif Bey, his counterpart in Lebanon, agreed that the Ottoman government should purchase the cereals sent by the American government so that the cereals could be seen to be distributed by the Ottoman government. If necessary, the process of distributing the grain could be supervised by a mutual commission consisting of Turks and Americans.⁶⁹ If the Americans did not accept the participation of the Turkish officials, this would mean, according to Azmi Bey, that they were seeking the restoration of their influence in Lebanon and that, therefore, their request should be refused.⁷⁰ Ali Münif Bey agreed with him on this issue, and advised that the American assistance be rejected for fear of American propaganda.⁷¹ In another report, Azmi Bey strongly objected to the assistance on the grounds that giving permission to the Americans to distribute food in Lebanon would make the Lebanese feel that the Ottoman state was incapable of meeting the needs of its own citizens and, at the same, increase American influence among the population. Therefore, he argued, the American assistance should not be accepted under any circumstances and the formidable task of provisioning Lebanon should be solved with the purchase of more grain from Hama.⁷²

Despite all these reservation, however, as he explains in his memoirs, Cemal Pasha sent a letter to the American ambassador in İstanbul via Enver Pasha stating his readiness to accept the American assistance unconditionally.⁷³ As understood from the documents of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society (Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti), the livestock departed from the United States on a ship called *Ceasar* bound for Beirut.⁷⁴ A joint commission was created, composed of members of the Ottoman Red Crescent and the American Red Cross, for the distribution of the cereals to "the destitute of Syria without any discrimination on the basis of religion or ethnicity [*bi-lâ*

tefrîku cins u mezheb].”⁷⁵ However, the failure to obtain the right of safe passage from the Entente fleet along the coasts of Syria ultimately caused these efforts to fail.⁷⁶

The social impact of the famine in Syria and the reaction of the people

In every place that I have visited, they cry, showing me scenes of absolute misery. Following a trip in the old and narrow streets of Damascus, in one place men and women repeatedly complained [about their situations] and a man who had appeared calm began to cry, putting his head between his hands. [The situation here is] always like this!⁷⁷

The social impact of the famine in Syria reveals the reasons behind the changing attitude of the Syrians toward the Ottoman government at the end of its rule. On the other hand, the nature of the new rule imposed with Cemal's drastic measures can better be observed when we analyze the direct effects of the famine and the other problems it gave rise to, such as epidemics and inflation. This section will first concentrate on the reaction of the urban population to the famine. Then the situation of the agricultural producers and their reactions to the pressures and impositions of Cemal Pasha will be analyzed. Finally, the most significant result of the famine, epidemic diseases, will be examined in the next section.

As stated above, the impact of the famine became critical in the beginning of 1916. At that point, starvation reached such a severe level that, in Damascus, women with children organized a demonstration in front of the headquarters of Cemal Pasha, the most fearsome man in Syria, shouting, “Give us bread, we are starving.” The Austrian consul attributed the responsibility for the starvation to speculation in cereals by the mayor, who was immediately dismissed by Cemal Pasha after the demonstration by the Damascene women.⁷⁸ The situation was similar in other provinces. In March 1916, in Aleppo, which had been the richest region at the beginning of the war in terms of agricultural production, Governor Mustafa Abdülhalık Bey complained that all the *kazas* of the province were crying out because of the starvation, adding that, if the provisioning of the province were insufficient, he would have to distribute the funds that had been collected for the tithe to the population to save them from dying of starvation.⁷⁹ In July 1916, the American consul in Beirut reported that the city's streets were “filled with starving women and children ... In my early evening walks I frequently see people lying dead in the gutter.” The police chief of Damascus told a Protestant pastor from Minneapolis in the winter of 1916 to 1917 that he received 70 reports of death daily, “while the mayor claimed that one-quarter of the city's population had disappeared since the start of the war.” Similarly, the American consul in Damascus reported that “starvation and famine [are]

everywhere; the men either in military service or in hiding, and the women and children reduced to beggary."⁸⁰

The circumstances of the population toward the end of the war had deteriorated tremendously. According to Humann, a German military official in Syria, the situation on the streets of Syria was so miserable that seeing the corpses of children and beggars in Damascus, Tripoli, Beirut, and Aleppo became an everyday event.⁸¹ In the first quarter of 1918, as a consequence of the terrible starvation, the people began to resort to cannibalism. In February of the same year, in Syrian Tripoli, some children between the ages of 5 and 8 began to disappear. Their parents were unsuccessful in finding them. Upon the discovery of the jacket of a lost child on another child, police managed to solve the mystery of the lost children. Their cooked bones and heads were found in a well in the house of two Maronite women from Lebanon. The women had killed, cooked, and eaten the children to avoid starvation. The head of one child was still in the kitchen when the women were caught.⁸²

According to Hoffman, a German official in Tripoli, who saw the corpses of the children with his own eyes, the women declared to the police that they had eaten the children to avoid starvation, and their physical appearance confirmed their claims. The level of starvation was so awful that the population also started to eat dead street dogs. Allegedly, in a village called Kalmoun, 4 kilometers from Tripoli, a woman cooked and ate her dead children.⁸³ After this, the governor of Beirut, Azmi Bey, sent 5,000 liras to Tripoli for distribution to the starving population.⁸⁴ Similarly, the German government dispatched 10,000 marks from its propaganda fund to be spent on the starving people.⁸⁵

The increase in poverty also led to a rise in prostitution in the cities of Syria. According to the remarks of Ihsan Turjman, an Ottoman soldier in Palestine, most of the prostitutes had to engage in prostitution to survive and they would not be involved in such work if it had not been a matter of financial necessity.⁸⁶

The ruthless way in which the Ottoman authorities seized grain for the army also had a strong negative impact on the attitude of urban residents and Bedouin tribes toward the government. Even in the first months of the war, according to the Austrian consul in Jerusalem, the requisitioning policy of the Ottoman government only contributed to the weakening of its prestige among the local population.⁸⁷ The following months of the war did not help to restore relations between the government and the Arabs. In September 1916, Governor Tahsin Bey reported that the atrocities perpetrated to seize grain and other requisitions made Syrian public opinion entirely hostile to the Ottoman government.⁸⁸ Toward the end of the war, the peasants started to hide their grain from the government officials. In response, the government increased the taxes on their products, which contributed to the rise of irregularities in the requisitions.⁸⁹

In this sense, the insistence on the circulation of paper money in the grain market and the atrocities and illegal methods of the gendarmerie caused great

disturbances among the local people, especially among the Bedouin producers of cereals.⁹⁰ In October 1916, upon the receiving payment from the government for their cereals in paper money and the incursions of some undisciplined gendarmerie troops who collected the cereals of these Bedouins on behalf of government contractors, the Bedouins of Hauran rebelled against the government. They attacked the stations of the Hijaz Railroad, killed the gendarmes providing security there, plundered the grain stores, and cut the telegraph lines. The insurgents were members of the Ruela, Huweitat, and Beni Sakhr tribes, the residents of five villages in Hauran, and army deserters living among them.⁹¹

According to the remarks of Governor Tahsin Bey, the movement had no political motivation,⁹² but Cemal Pasha writes that the rebellion was provoked by supporters of Sharif Hussein attempting to spread the sharif's movement in Syria. In his memoirs, Cemal condemns Tahsin Bey for being ignorant of the realities of the region and, therefore, misunderstanding the reasons behind the incidents, seeking those responsible inside the country.⁹³ The Austrian and German consuls thought along similar lines to Tahsin Bey.⁹⁴ In this regard, it is worth mentioning that the Druze, who were to a large extent beyond the government's control, did not join in this rebellion because of their privileges allowing them to sell their agricultural products freely.⁹⁵

After a small conflict between the rebellious Bedouins and government troops near the villages of Cakim, Tuy, and Enhal, the rebellion was suppressed and calm was returned to the region.⁹⁶ Meanwhile, in the words of Governor Tahsin Bey, some undisciplined gendarmerie divisions who had committed atrocities against the villagers left their posts for fear of the revenge of the Bedouins.⁹⁷ Afterwards they were captured by army troops and sent to Damascus for trial. In addition, due to their responsibility for the uprising, the administrators of three *nahiyes* in Hauran were brought to Damascus for the same purpose. The responsible gendarmes were delivered to the court martial.⁹⁸ As for the rebellious groups, since the Bedouins ran away into the desert, the government only managed to arrest some villagers. Some of them were sentenced to death, while others were imprisoned.⁹⁹ After the incident, 50–60 men from among the chiefs of the rebellious tribes came to the governor of Syria to restore peace. In the meeting, they explained that the rebellion broke out because of the payment of paper money in the purchase of their grains.¹⁰⁰ The suppression of the rebellion was crucial for the Ottoman government, since the place of its occurrence created the potential for the disturbances to spread to the north of Medina, and thus to contribute to the sharif's movement by cutting the connection between Medina and Damascus.¹⁰¹

Famine, epidemics, and the struggle against them

The tremendous increase in the spread of epidemic diseases heightened the traumatic social impact of the famine. Throughout the war, various diseases

such as typhus, cholera, typhoid, and malaria emerged in various districts in Syria, and their spread was facilitated by malnutrition. In addition to starvation, the decrease in the number of physicians and nurses who could tend to the sick was another reason for the spread of these diseases. Before the war, many of the medical service providers living in Syria were subjects of the Entente states and were therefore expelled at the beginning of the war. In addition, a majority of the Ottoman physicians had been called up for military service. Others fell victim to the typhus epidemic of 1915. Therefore, the number of physicians available to care for the civilian population was so dramatically decreased that in Jaffa there were only four physicians for 40,000 inhabitants, while, in Jerusalem, there were 6–8 for 80,000 people. The number of civilian physicians was between 20 and 30 for each town before the war.¹⁰² Because of this lack of physicians, in the year 1916, 14 doctors who were older than 45 had to be conscripted to help deal with the epidemics.¹⁰³

The first epidemic was an outbreak of typhus in Damascus in April 1915. Lice infestation among the soldiers, which contributed to the spread of typhus, accompanied these epidemics. Fearing the spread of typhus and lice among the troops in the Syrian cities, Cemal Pasha assigned the German professor Mühlens¹⁰⁴ to fight the epidemic.¹⁰⁵ Mühlens prepared some instructions to improve hygiene in the cities and towns of Syria. He advised that marshy areas be dried up to prevent the emergence and spread of epidemics. In the same regard, the German professor advised the installation of plumbing into the cities. The most radical measure he proposed against the epidemics was to burn the town of Afule, which had been the source of an outbreak of cholera.¹⁰⁶ In Aleppo, at the end of June 1915, a clinic for infectious diseases was created for the local population and a sanitation commission was assigned to closely follow the course of the epidemic, meeting two times weekly.¹⁰⁷ All these instructions were obeyed meticulously. The streets and water canals were cleaned and significant sanitary regulations were introduced for foodstuffs sold by street vendors. In some towns, slaughterhouses were established for the butchering of cattle. In addition, emergency medical services were established in all garrisons. In all town hospitals, special rooms were created for the removal of lice.¹⁰⁸ A water supply network was established in Aleppo by an engineer from the German colony in Haifa, Dr. Gottlieb Schumacher, using the water source in Ayintel, 4.5 kilometers from Aleppo, at a cost of 15,000 liras from the budget of the 4th Army.¹⁰⁹ The burning of Afule was carried out on the orders of Cemal Pasha.¹¹⁰ At the end of June 1915, upon the increase of typhus cases among the people, the hospital for the municipality in Jerusalem was evacuated and allocated for the treatment of epidemic diseases. The city of Jerusalem was divided into nine regions and two doctors were assigned by the army to each region. All the people in Jerusalem received medical examinations and every house was investigated and disinfected with sulphur. A quarantine was implemented for 11 days for infected persons. As a result of these measures the disease was brought under control.¹¹¹

Upon the arrival of the Armenian refugees from Anatolia, Cemal applied strict measures to prevent the outbreak of epidemic diseases. On 2 September 1915, he issued an order to the Army Inspectorate for Logistics Support in Aleppo demanding the examination of refugees and other passengers – soldiers and civilians – in railroad stations before allowing them to continue to their final destination and the treatment of those found to be ill.¹¹² Two Armenian doctors, Hachik Bogosyan and Toros Ovacikyan, were assigned to this job.¹¹³ In December 1915, a typhus epidemic emerged in northern Syria.¹¹⁴ During December, nearly 500 persons died of typhus daily in Aleppo.¹¹⁵ Both soldiers and the civilian population were profoundly affected by this disease. To prevent the further spread of the disease, Cemal established medical centers in two buildings – one was seized from the British consulate and the second was abandoned still under construction at the beginning of the war by a French institution – to fight the disease, quarantining and curing civilians and soldiers.¹¹⁶ The confiscated French Hospital in Aleppo was evacuated and allocated to the Armenian sick.¹¹⁷ A 200-bed isolation house and steam houses with mobile steam teams (*seyyar buhar ekipleri*) were also set up.¹¹⁸

A campaign informing the local population of ways to avoid infection was commenced in Aleppo at the same time. Cemal had brochures prepared in Arabic and Turkish teaching the people how to protect themselves from infection. The brochures were distributed to every house while posters were hung in crowded streets and avenues. In addition, the people were informed in mosques, synagogues, and churches about the issues covered in the brochures. Those who disregarded these orders, including doctors, would be punished heavily. The schools were closed until further notice. The sick could get free treatment in the “French Hospital.” They could be treated in Doctor Altunyan’s hospital for 3 majidiyehs, in the military hospital for 1 majidiyeh, and in the hospital of the municipality for 10 qurush.¹¹⁹

This time Cemal appointed another German physician, Dr. Karl Vayland [?], as coordinator general to deal with the epidemic diseases. He was assigned 500 liras by the governorate of Aleppo. Vayland organized the cleansing and disinfection of the city of Aleppo, as well as overseeing the implementation of the points announced in the brochures mentioned above. He was also ordered to use coercive measures, if necessary, and to arrange the transportation of patients between the city and the hospitals. Like Jerusalem, the city of Aleppo was divided into regions – six; a physician and commander were allocated for each region. The dead would be buried according to sanitary guidelines. Cemal himself also inspected the kitchens, dining halls, and critical inpatients to see whether the rules were being followed.¹²⁰

The year 1916 can be regarded as the year of epidemics for the Syrian provinces. According to the statistics of the 4th Army, in that year, the number of soldiers hospitalized for epidemic diseases was calculated at

15,130.¹²¹ Just in January 1916, 685 army personnel would die from such diseases.¹²² In March 1916, 532 of 2,417 typhoid cases resulted in death; 230 of 381 dysentery cases; and 150 of 1,535 relapsing fever cases.¹²³ In April, the total number of deaths from relapsing fever was calculated at 748 out of 3,060 cases.¹²⁴ To be more specific in terms of localities, in the beginning of the year, a typhus epidemic caused great damage in Jerusalem.¹²⁵ According to the Spanish consul in Jerusalem, on 16 May 1916, "in a single day there were 97 cases."¹²⁶ Together with the critical food shortage, the epidemic diseases started to spread. During the summer of the same year, between 20 and 30 persons fell victim to cholera daily, and in Hebron 700 died of this disease. In Biriüssebi, according to the Spanish consul, on 14 June, there were many cases of cholera. In Asludj, a case of cholera appeared on the same day.¹²⁷ However, the consul wrote that, by June 1916, in Jerusalem, typhus cases had been reduced to five per day, while this number was 60 for Damascus.¹²⁸ All through the Syria typhoid became endemic and the resulting mortality grew to startling proportions.¹²⁹ According to Schilling, the hygienist of the 4th Army, who spoke to Theodor Wiegand, the reasons for the spread of the epidemics were as follows: the municipality's lack of water filtration, the ineffectiveness of disinfection in hospitals because of improper procedures, badly purified cisterns, frequent blocking of water channels, and insufficient foodstuffs.¹³⁰

In the same period of time, the northern provinces of the country were also suffering from cholera. According to the testimony of the secretary of the Beirut branch of the American Presbyterian Board of Missions, the death rate among soldiers at Islahiye was 30 per day. The sick soldiers were quarantined and sent to Aleppo as quickly as possible.¹³¹ At the same time, according to the diaries of the Ottoman prisoners captured in the battle of Katia by the British army, large numbers of the Armenian refugees fell victim to cholera.¹³² As a measure to prevent the spread of the disease, the Germans sent 300,000 anti-cholera injection doses to the bacteriological laboratory in Jerusalem and these helped hold it in check.¹³³ In mid-1917, due to the inadequacy of available laboratories, three mobile bacteriology laboratories were to be sent from Istanbul to help deal with the epidemics.¹³⁴ In the same regard, in February 1916, a 1,000-bed *vatan* (motherland) hospital was opened in Aleppo, and Cemal ordered the construction of another 1,000-bed hospital.¹³⁵ The establishment of a hospital in Beirut by Dr. Neşet Ömer, the director for the struggle against epidemic diseases under the 4th Army, was planned, with Cemal promising 748,000 qurush for this purpose.¹³⁶ In Damascus, construction of a 2,000-bed hospital began in May 1917.¹³⁷ The Zionist societies in America planned to send an expedition of physicians to Palestine to stop the spread of the epidemics among the Jewish people.¹³⁸ They managed to get the permission of the Entente states to pass their blockade along the Syrian coast.¹³⁹ However, their journey was prohibited by Cemal Pasha, on the grounds that it would serve the propaganda interests of the Zionist movement.¹⁴⁰

Special treatment was offered in the convalescent houses to help recovering soldiers get ready for military service again. In the summer, the daily program of the convalescent houses was as follows:

Breakfast at 7:00 with milky tea, milky chocolate or milky coffee and a soft-boiled egg with sufficient bread. Between 09:00 and 11:00: light physical training and gymnastic exercises ... Lesson [*Ders*] between 16:00 and 18:00. Dinner at 18:00. Lecture by the physician of the convalescent house between 20:00 and 21:00 two times a week on health in the military, and courses in the same number by the officer of the house on military [*askeri*] theories.¹⁴¹

The epidemic diseases did not only affect the lower classes and soldiers. The upper classes of society and the Turkish officials were also severely affected by the various epidemics. Similarly, many Germans were unable to avoid them. Although they were careful about taking precautions, such as boiling water before consumption, many lost their lives. The German consul in Damascus, Loytved, died of typhus. Cemal Pasha's construction works supervisor, Maximilian Zürcher, was infected with the same disease.¹⁴² In September 1916, the wife of the director of the Austrian hospital, Mrs. Schrötter, died of an epidemic disease.¹⁴³ A British intelligence report estimated that 20 percent of the Syrian population was affected by the epidemics.¹⁴⁴

As a result of the precautions taken to prevent the threat of epidemics, Cemal created an effective health system throughout all the Syrian provinces. By December 1917, the 4th Army's sanitation system was working effectively along the railroad and chausseed roads from Pozantı to the Sinai Desert. In Aleppo, Damascus, and Jerusalem, sanitation institutions examined, conducted bacteriological check-ups of, and injected soldiers and civilians thought to be carrying disease. In Jerusalem, there was a laboratory preparing smallpox vaccine and a medical service for making rabies vaccine. In the recruiting offices of Aleppo, Beirut, Damascus, and Jerusalem, there were hygiene stations serving only army personnel. During the war, the hospitals were reformed and reorganized and *vatan* hospitals were opened in Adana, Aleppo, Damascus, Nazareth, and Jerusalem.¹⁴⁵

In conclusion, the conditions conducive to famine under Ottoman rule in Syria were generally due to the government's increasing control over the population. The Entente's responsibility in this disaster was considerable, especially for the coastal regions. As for the measures taken by Cemal Pasha, these were essential to restore order to social life in Syria, and most of his efforts and measures against the famine aimed at achieving this goal. Cemal wanted to ensure the survival of the citizens in Syria to be able to assert the state's full control over them. On the other hand, as a result of the extraordinary consequences of the famine in the Syrian realm, the attitude of the

people toward the government took a strong negative turn. However, it is worth noting as a concluding remark that this change had no political dimension. It was only due to dissatisfaction because of deteriorating living conditions. These remarks from the diaries of Ihsan Turjman indicate how anti-Ottoman sentiment could be entirely unpolitical:

Agency news arrived today indicating that German troops have retreated from opposition in France. This could mean the beginning of defeat for the Austrians and the Germans. Thank God. We all need this war to come to an end. I do not care who wins and who loses. If this were a decent government that treats us properly, then my life and my companions' lives would be devoted to the nation. But, as it is, a drop of my blood (and a hair from my leg) is worth the thrones of the Ottoman sultans.¹⁴⁶

In a similar way, the diaries of Wasif Jawhariyeh indicate that some portions of the population were delighted more about the end of the difficulties brought about by the war than about being rescued from the "Ottoman yoke." Wasif, summarizes his sentiments in his diaries as follows:

Truthfully, it was a joyous holiday for all our family because the British had come and the Arab people were rid of the nightmare of the tyrant Turks. We all had great hope for a better future, especially after what we had suffered from war, famine, and disease, in particular, Typhus, which had spread all over the country. Thank God for saving our youth from the damned army service.¹⁴⁷

Notes

1 Schilcher, *Problems*, p. 229.

2 Antonius, *Arab Awakening*, p. 241.

3 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, pp. 216, 219.

4 For an archival document making the same claim, see: TNA, FO 371/2779, Sykes to FO, Cairo, 15 July 1916. Upon receiving the news, Cemal would send 20,000 liras to Lebanon to buy grains and would demand that news of this aid be published in the press: BOA, DH.ŞFR 532/57, Cemal to Talat, Jerusalem, 5 Temmuz 1332 (18 July 1916); for an academic evaluation of claims regarding the intentional starvation of Lebanon by Cemal Pasha, see: Kévorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, p. 681.

5 HHStA, PA38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 15 December 1915.

6 TNA, FO 195/2460, Aleppo consul to Louis Mallet, Aleppo, 31 August 1914; for a similar report by the American consul-general, see: USNA, RG 59, 867.00/708, the American consul-general to Morgenthau, 23 October 1914; the situation was similar in other towns in Syria. In May 1915, the German consul in Beirut reported that no other city in Syria had seen requisitions implemented in a harsher way. He added that the government requisitioned the cereals of the inland cities of Syria, as well: PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 1 May 1915.

7 USNA, 867.00/714, Sabbagh to consul-general, Tiberius, 27 August 1914.

- 8 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 1 May 1915.
- 9 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 44/97, Ministry of Interior to the governor of Jerusalem, 13 Ağustos 1330 (26 August 1914).
- 10 For some examples, see: **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 1/2, 28 Ağustos 1330 (10 September 1914).
- 11 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 487/10, Bekir Sami to Talat, Beirut, 21 Ağustos 1331 (3 September 1915).
- 12 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 1 May 1915.
- 13 For the governor of Jerusalem's request for seeds, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 501/123, Midhat to Talat, Jerusalem, 6 Kanun-ı Evvel 1331 (19 December 1915); for the request of the governor of Syria, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 502/91, Azmi to Talat, Damascus, 13 Kanun-ı Evvel 1915 (26 December 1915).
- 14 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 15 December 1915; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 469/45, Celal to Talat, Aleppo, 19 Nisan 1331 (2 May 1915).
- 15 **TNA**, FO371/2783, WO to FO, 3 November 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Stotzingen to AA, 17 November 1916.
- 16 **BOA**, DH-İ.U.M.EK 95/59, Talat to the governorates, 10 Eylül 1331 (23 September 1915).
- 17 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Dandini to Czernin, Aleppo, 16 February 1917.
- 18 **BOA**, DH.UMVM 137/22, Director of Agricultural Issues to Talat, Damascus, 22 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (5 December 1916).
- 19 **TNA**, FO371/2783, WO to FO, 3 November 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Stotzingen to AA, 17 November 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Ruppin to Abraham Elkus, Constantinople, 13 December 1916. Similar complaints can be found in the reports of the governor of Syria. Immediately after his appointment as governor, he complained about the limitless violence exhibited in the collection of food from the peasants. For details, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/63, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 13 Eylül 1332 (26 September 1916).
- 20 For the details of the privileges of the Druze, see the Chapter 6.
- 21 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 568/10, Abdülkadir to Talat, Zor, 8 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (8 November 1917).
- 22 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 10, Warburg and Jakobson to AA, 3 November 1916. According to the Austrian consul in Damascus, lack of food was not the only reason for the starvation, but that problems of transportation and organization also played a role. **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 22 June 1915. Furthermore, the Ottoman accounts confirm their evaluations; in a report from the governor of Aleppo on the harvest of 1914, he described the abundance of the harvest there, stating that this level of yield had rarely been seen in the last 23 years. The amount of grain in and around Aleppo was so great that, besides its own needs, the production of the province sufficed to meet the needs of the 4th Army and, in addition, a considerable amount of cereals were also sent to Istanbul. However, the governor complained about the lack of transportation inside Syria to get the food to Beirut and Lebanon: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 469/45, Celal to Talat, Aleppo, 19 Nisan 1331 (2 May 1915).
- 23 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 1 May 1915.
- 24 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 22 June 1915.
- 25 The trains on the railroad between Damascus and Birüssebi consumed 150 tons of wood daily: **TNA**, FO 371/2783, WO to FO, 3 November 1916.
- 26 **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 31 July 1915.
- 27 At the end of the war, the scarcity of rolling stock was so increased that the governor of Aleppo had to demand coal for the transfer of Ottoman officials from Syria: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR Abdülhalık to Ministry of Interior, Aleppo 4 Teşrin-i Evvel 1334 (4 October 1918).
- 28 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Löytvet to Bethmann-Hollweg, Haifa, 14 April 1915.

- 29 Von Kressenstein, *Mit dem Türken*, pp. 119–120.
- 30 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 214.
- 31 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 25 September 1916.
- 32 HHStA, PA 38/370, Kiatkowski to Czernin, Beirut, 4 May 1917; PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Jaffa to Von Rosenberg, Jaffa, 4 March 1916.
- 33 For example, when a customer wanted to give paper money for 23 kilograms of wheat, he would have to pay 120 liras instead of 50 liras in gold: PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Jerusalem to the Director of the Deutschen Orientbank Constantinople, Jerusalem, 13 October 1916.
- 34 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Deutsche Palaestina Bank Beirut to Von Rosenberg, Beirut, 29 April 1916.
- 35 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Weber to Hertling, Constantinople, 26 June 1918; in the other regions of the empire – in Anatolia and at Constantinople – Ottoman paper money was generally accepted and supplies could be purchased with paper money: TNA, FO 371/3050, William Yale to British Ambassador, Washington, 13 July 1917.
- 36 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Stotzingen to AA, 17 April 1916.
- 37 Hans von Kiesling, *Rund um den Libanon: Friedliche Wanderungen waehrend des Weltkrieges*, Leipzig: Dieterich'sche Verlagbuchhandlung, 1920, p. 30.
- 38 PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 11, Mutius to Bethmann-Hollweg, Beirut, 1 May 1915; PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Ruppin to Abraham Elkus, Constantinople, 13 December 1916. According to a British report on Lebanon, the yearly losses in the Beirut silk trade amounted to 800,000 pounds: TNA, FO371/2783, WO to FO, 3 November 1916; Von Kressenstein, *Mit dem Türken*, p. 30.
- 39 Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights Paternal Privilege and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, p. 22.
- 40 BOA, DH.ŞFR 540/105, Ali Münif to Talat, Beirut, 7 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (20 December 1916).
- 41 HHStA, PA 38/369, Nedwed to Burian, Beirut, 26 October 1916; similar information can be found at: PA-AA, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, Ruppin to Abraham Elkus, Constantinople, 13 December 1916.
- 42 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, p. 19.
- 43 HHStA, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 26 January 1918.
- 44 Schilcher, "The Famine of 1915–18," p. 254.
- 45 HHStA, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 January 1916.
- 46 Schilcher, "The Famine of 1915–18," p. 236.
- 47 HHStA, PA38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 15 December 1915.
- 48 For example, the comparatively high grain prices in Beirut and Lebanon led to increased transportation to these cities from Hauran. The merchants started to transfer the grain to the cities where the prices were higher: HHStA, PA38/366, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 15 December 1915.
- 49 HHStA, PA38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 3 March 1916.
- 50 HHStA, PA38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 25 September 1916.
- 51 In response to the scarcity of hard coin the Damascus municipality published the following proclamation in the *al-Muqtabas* newspaper:

All small vendors, bakers, butchers, bathkeepers, vegetable dealers, cookshops, cafekeepers, barbers, and grocers etc. of all sorts, who receive small change should bring half of the money they receive to the municipality, for which they will be given paper money in exchange.

TNA, FO 371/2768, extract from *al-Muqtabas* of Damascus, "Retail vendors and small change," undated.

- 52 **HHStA**, PA38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 20 October 1916. The vice-governor of Syria had opposed the free trade of grain on the grounds that the opening of free trade would both increase the price of cereals and push the villagers to the brink of starvation, because they would sell all the grain they possessed due to the increase in prices: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 517/47, Ahmed to Talat, Damascus, 10 Nisan 1332 (23 April 1916).
- 53 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Kiatkowski to Czernin, Beirut, 4 May 1917.
- 54 For a German translation of the announcement, see: **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 24 April 1917.
- 55 The names and the engagements of the merchants were as follows: *Muslims*: Said Kabbani, Tawfiq Nawlati, and Salim Nachlawi (all major traders in colonial produce), Abd al-Wahhab Smadi and Shafiq Hashim (manufacturers), Muhammad Nadar (miller), Lutfi Hafiz (chemist); *Christians*: Khalil Kahla (major cloth trader), Khalil Warde (fine goods trader), Iskender Kabawat (mercenary goods trader), Khalil Karduss and Georges İstifan (traders in domestic products), Khalil Maatuk and Georges Maatuk (brass traders); *Jews*: Tawfiq Legnado and Arslan Totah (bankers), Harun Yadid (commissioner), Joseph Abade and Nathan Katran (cloth traders), Ezra Esetek and Benjamin Shamaja (money changers): **HHStA**, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 1 June 1917. The German figures are different than this. The ambassador reported that nine Jews, six Christians, and three Muslims were selected randomly: **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 23 May 1917.
- 56 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 24 October 1917; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 572/52, Cemal to Talat, Damascus, 27 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (27 November 1917).
- 57 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg, Constantinople, 23 May 1917.
- 58 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 557/56, Azmi to Talat, Beirut, 18 Haziran 1333 (18 June 1917).
- 59 In the Ottoman Empire, those who were liable for military service could be exempted from their services by paying a sum of money.
- 60 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 2 March 1917. The government's announcement published in *Journale de Beyrouth* was as follows:

All those who have been exempted from military service with the payment of the exoneration tax may be exempted for another year if they bring the military authorities, within one month from this date, any of the following: 4,000 kilograms of wheat, 4,550 kgs of barley, 4,000 kgs of potato, 5,150 kgs of lentils, 3,200 kgs of dry peas, 3,320 kg of bulgur (crushed wheat), 4,300 kg of durrha, 8,000 kg of berseem.

- PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, The Near East, Cairo, 18 May 1917.
- 61 **HHStA**, PA 38/370, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 2 March 1917.
- 62 **HHStA**, PA 38/371, Ranzi to Czernin, Damascus, 16 April 1918.
- 63 For a study on the Wealth Tax, see: Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık Vergisi ve Türkleştirme Politikaları*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000.
- 64 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Ziemke to Hertling, Damascus, 12 April 1918.
- 65 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 580/51, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 21 Mart 1334 (21 March 1918).
- 66 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 14, Bernstoff to Bethmann-Hollweg, 15 February 1917.
- 67 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 540/105, Ali Münif to Talat, Beirut, 7 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (20 December 1916).
- 68 For a summary of the views of the Ottoman authorities on the issue, see: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 538/29, Azmi to Talat, Nazareth, 10 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (24 November 1916).

- 69 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 538/29, Azmi to Talat, Der'a, 5 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (19 November 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 540/105, Ali Münif to Talat, Beirut, 7 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (20 December 1916).
- 70 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 538/29, Azmi to Talat, Der'a, 5 Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (19 November 1916).
- 71 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 540/105, Ali Münif to Talat, Beirut, 7 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (20 December 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 542/3, Azmi to Talat, Beirut, 20 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (2 January 1917).
- 72 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 542/3, Azmi to Talat, Beirut, 20 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (2 January 1917).
- 73 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 219.
- 74 **Kızılây Arşivi**, 94/129, the undersecretary of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs to the vice-president of the Red Crescent Society, 27 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (9 January 1917).
- 75 **Kızılây Arşivi**, 94/127, the undersecretary of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs to the vice-president of the Red Crescent Society, 22 Kanun-ı Evvel 1332 (4 January 1917).
- 76 After that, the director of the Ottoman Red Crescent in Lebanon was assigned to buy grain from the other Syrian cities and transport it to Lebanon; **Kızılây Arşivi**, 71/78, Unsigned to the head office of the Red Crescent Society, 6 Mart 1333 (6 March 1917). However, like previous undertakings by the Ottoman government, due to the lack of transportation, the Lebanese could not be protected against the famine.
- 77 Halide Edib to Cavid Bey, Beirut, 1 March 1917, in Murat Bardakçı (ed.), *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, p. 151.
- 78 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 11 January 1916.
- 79 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 514/80, Mustafa to Talat, Aleppo, 13 Mart 1332 (26 March 1916).
- 80 Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, p. 20.
- 81 **BA-MA**, RM 5/2323, Humann to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Aleppo, 22 April 1918.
- 82 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, AA to German ambassador in Istanbul, 2 March 1918.
- 83 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Hoffmann to the German consulate in Beirut, Tripoli of Syria, 19 February 1918. Another German official from Aleppo, Humann, made similar expressions confirming the report of Hoffmann. For details, see: **BA-MA**, RM 5/2323, Humann to Chief of the Admiraltys of Marine, Aleppo, 22 April 1918.
- 84 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, Mutius to Hertling, Beirut, 1 March 1918.
- 85 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 17, AA to German ambassador in Istanbul, 2 March 1918.
- 86 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 29 April 1915, p. 114.
- 87 **HHStA**, PA 12/209, Pallavicini to Burian, Constantinople, 15 July 1915.
- 88 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/36, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 12 Eylül 1332 (25 September 1916).
- 89 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 570/103, Bedri to Talat, Aleppo, 7 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (7 November 1917).
- 90 In May 1918, the deputy chief of the Gendarmerie regiment in Lebanon, Şevket Efendi, was brought to the court martial since he had sold 8,000 kilograms of cereals from the army stores: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 584/79, İsmail Hakkı to Ministry of Interior, Beirut, 16 May 1918.
- 91 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 9 October 1916; **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 1 November 1916; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/84, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 17 Eylül 1332 (30 September 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/63, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 13 Eylül 1332 (26 September 1916).

- 92 Governor Tahsin Bey reported that he received many tips on the cruelties of gendarmes against the Bedouins and disregard for the rules by small-ranking officials in estimating the tithe on the harvest of the rebellious people. He ordered the punishment of the gendarmes and officials responsible, and the appointment of a powerful governor to Hauran for the permanent restoration of peace: **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 7/73, Tahsin to Talat, 29 Eylül 1916 (11 October 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/102, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 17 Eylül 1332 (30 September 1916); **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/63, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 13 Eylül 1332 (26 September 1916).
- 93 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 217.
- 94 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 9 October 1916; **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 40, Löytvet to Bethmann-Hollweg, Damascus, 12 October 1916.
- 95 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 1 November 1916; **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/84, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 13 Eylül 1332 (26 September 1916).
- 96 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/19, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 24 Eylül 1332 (7 October 1916). In these conflicts 140 rebels were killed and more than 50 were wounded: **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 534/74, Tahsin to Talat, Deraa, 24 Eylül 1332 (7 October 1916).
- 97 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/102, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 17 Eylül 1332 (30 September 1916).
- 98 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 533/19, Tahsin to Talat, Damascus, 24 Eylül 1332 (7 October 1916).
- 99 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 1 November 1916.
- 100 **BOA**, DH.EUM 4.Şb 7/73, Tahsin to Talat, 29 Eylül 1916 (11 October 1916).
- 101 **HHStA**, PA 38/369, Ranzi to Burian, Damascus, 9 October 1916.
- 102 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 10, Ruppın to AA, 3 November 1916.
- 103 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3253, Ds. 7, Fih. 8, 8–2, in Tetik, “Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele.” The documents of the Ottoman Red Crescent indicate that a serious shortage of nurses prevailed in Syria beginning with the outbreak of war. In February 1917, the command of the 4th Army requested that the Red Crescent put a job advertisement in the newspapers to find employees for the hospitals in northern Syria: **Kızılay Arşivi**, 714/67, Cemal to the vice-president of the Red Crescent Society, 2 Şubat 1332 (15 February 1917).
- 104 Prof. Mühlens was appointed as health advisor to the 4th Army to struggle against the epidemics: Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 141.
- 105 **BA-MA**, RM 40/678, Mühlens to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, 16 April 1916; **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 23 May 1915.
- 106 Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 141.
- 107 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3243, Ds. 2, Fih. 1, Ali Galib (the health director of the Fourth Army) to the Ottoman Headquarters, 29 Haziran 1915, in Tetik, “Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele.”
- 108 **BA-MA**, RM 40/678, Mühlens to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, 16 April 1916; **HHStA**, PA 38/366, Ranzi to Berchtold, Damascus, 23 May 1915.
- 109 Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 235; Kayalı, “Wartime Regional and Imperial Integration,” p. 301; Watzinger, *Theodor Wiegand: ein Deutscher Archäologe 1864–1936*, Munich: C.H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1944, p. 289.
- 110 Erden, *Suriye Hatıraları*, p. 141; in a telegram sent to the commissariat in Aleppo, Cemal warns them to strictly follow the measures against epidemics. For details, see: **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3253, Ds. 5A, Fih. 1–5, in Tetik, “Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele.”
- 111 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3253, Ds. 2, Fih. 1–1, 29 June 1915, in Tetik, “Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele.”
- 112 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3253, Ds. 2, Fih. 7; Ds. 5A, Fih. 1–6; Ds. 6, Fih. 7–1, 2 September 1915, in Tetik, *ibid.*
- 113 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3253, Ds. 6, Fih. 7a, 2 September 1915, in Tetik, *ibid.*

- 114 In October 1915, in his correspondence with the German consul in Aleppo, V. Kress expressed anxiety about the possibility of the spread of the typhus epidemic among the troops as a result of the refugee influx. For details, see: **BA-MA**, RM 40/678, Aleppo consul to the Etappen-Kommando in Constantinople, 28 October 1916.
- 115 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 10, Ruppın to AA, 3 November 1916.
- 116 **BOA**, DH.ŞFR 501/106, Fuad to Talat, Aleppo, 4 Kanun-ı Evvel 1331 (17 December 1915).
- 117 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3254, Ds. 1, Fih. 1–13, in Tetik, “Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele.”
- 118 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 2451, Ds. 219, Fih. 3–4, in Tetik, *ibid.*
- 119 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3254, Ds. 1, Fih. 1–13, in Tetik, *ibid.*
- 120 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3254, Ds. 1, Fih. 1–13, in Tetik, *ibid.* Similar orders were issued for the health officials in Syria by the sanitation department of the 4th Army. For an example from April 1916, see: **Kızılay Arşivi**, 394/22, from the presidency of the sanitation department of the 4th Army, 15 Nisan 1332 (15 April 1916).
- 121 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 2184, Ds. 14, Fih. 14–12, in Tetik, *ibid.*
- 122 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 2184, Ds. 14, Fih. 14–14, in Tetik, *ibid.*
- 123 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 2184, Ds. 14, Fih. 14–1, in Tetik, *ibid.*
- 124 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 2184, Ds. 14, Fih. 14–1a, in Tetik, *ibid.*
- 125 **BA-MA**, RM 40/678, Busse to the Chief of the Admiralty, 7 February 1916.
- 126 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 96.
- 127 Ballobar, *ibid.*, p. 101.
- 128 Ballobar, *ibid.*, p. 99.
- 129 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 10, Ruppın to AA, 3 November 1916.
- 130 Theodor Wiegand to his wife, 23 October 1916, Jerusalem, in Wiegand *Halbmond*, p. 193.
- 131 **TNA**, FO 371/2779, Franklin Hoskins to FO, 26 August 1916.
- 132 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 13, the Near East, Cairo, 8 August 1916.
- 133 **TNA**, FO 371/2783, WO to FO, Report of an inhabitant of Athlit, Mount Carmel, 3 November 1916.
- 134 **Kızılay Arşivi**, 104/4, the director-general of health to the vice-president of the Red Crescent Society, 25 Temmuz 1332 (25 July 1917).
- 135 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3254, Ds. 1, Fih. 1–20; 1–20a, in Tetik, “Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele.”
- 136 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3244, Ds. 9, Fih. 2–2, in Tetik, *ibid.* In August 1916, Cemal combined all the health services of the cities in his army district under the presidency of Dr. Neşet Ömer: **Kızılay Arşivi**, 44/166, the director-general of health to the vice-president of the Red Crescent Society, 25 Temmuz 1332 (7 August 1916).
- 137 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3244, Ds. 9, Fih. 3, in Tetik, *ibid.*
- 138 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 9, Warburg and Jacobson to AA, Berlin, 22 October 1916.
- 139 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 10, Warburg and Jacobson to AA, Berlin, 30 November 1916.
- 140 **PA-AA**, Türkei 195, Bd. 10, Göppert to AA (transmitting Lichtheim), Constantinople, 12 December 1916.
- 141 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3254, Ds. 1, Fih. 1–37, in Tetik, “Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele.”
- 142 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 15, Maximilian Zürcher to Arnhold, Jerusalem, 2 June 1917; **TNA**, FO 371/2783, WO to FO, 3 November 1916.
- 143 Ballobar, *Jerusalem*, p. 110.
- 144 **TNA**, FO 371/2783, WO to FO, 3 November 1916.

- 145 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls. 3244, Ds. 10, Fih. 3–1, in Tetik, “Salgın Hastalıklarla Mücadele”; toward the end of 1917, Cemal sent Arif Atif Bey, one of the doctors from the 4th Army, to Europe to procure the necessary tools for a better health system in Syria. For details, see: **Kızılay Arşivi**, 94/129, Fuad to the secretary of the Red Crescent Society, 24 Eylül 1333 (24 September 1917).
- 146 Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, p. 30, September 1915, p. 138.
- 147 Jawhariyeh, “My Last Days,” p. 33.

8 Cemal Pasha's undoing in Syria

Toward the end of 1916, the British strategy of defense in the Suez Canal evolved into one of offense and the General Command in Egypt decided to occupy the east of the canal to move toward Palestine. After long battles and heavy losses, the British troops captured and fortified the Sinai Desert and were able to reach almost to Gaza, which was considered the gate to Jerusalem. They had to retreat two times with heavy losses. However, they did not abandon their aims and began preparations for a third attack against Gaza.

The Ottoman army in Syria under Cemal Pasha's command managed to defend the Gaza front successfully during the first two British attacks. However, while the preparations were underway for a third battle in Gaza, the situation of the Palestine front was fundamentally changed with the outbreak of the revolution in Russia and with the capture of Baghdad by British troops on 11 March 1917. The drastic change in Russia and the relocation of British troops in Salonika to Egypt freed up Ottoman troops on the eastern and western fronts in Anatolia and enabled the Ottoman headquarters to use these troops on other fronts. As a result, the only fronts where battles continued in the Ottoman lands were in Syria and Iraq. All these developments diverted Enver Pasha's interest toward the recapture of Baghdad and, without losing any time, he commenced preparations to recapture the city.¹ Due to problems in railroad transportation and the telegraph network, communication between the headquarters and the army's commandships in these regions presented some difficulties. For that reason, before arriving at the idea of the Yıldırım Army Groups taking Baghdad back, Enver contemplated moving his headquarters to Aleppo to improve communication with these fronts.² He kept this idea in mind even after the creation of the Yıldırım corps until the eve of the capture of Jerusalem by the British troops. In one of his telegrams to Talat in the middle of November 1917, while he was in Syria, Enver mentioned his plan to move his headquarters to Aleppo within 15 or 20 days.³

Enver Pasha's plan to reconquer Baghdad was supported by the German headquarters to such an extent that they actively intervened in the preparation process and prepared a plan to place all the armies in Syria and Iraq under one German commander. This was not because the Germans wanted to

assist their allies, but because they saw the opportunity to increase German influence in Arab districts. They therefore set aside enormous amounts of money for this project. As a result, on 2 July 1917, they created the Yıldırım Army Groups in Istanbul for the recapture of Baghdad. Most of the staff officers were German and General Falkenhayn, the ex-chief of staff of the German army, was appointed as the commander of these groups. The forces released from the Russian front and the western Anatolian front constituted the main body of these army groups.⁴

These army groups had been created by the German headquarters, and it seems that they not only disregarded Turkish sentiment, but also neglected to take proper account of the local conditions. According to Liman von Sanders, his mission, which had the advantage of three-and-a-half years' of experience in Turkey, was not even consulted regarding the transformation of the army structure in Iraq and Syria, nor was its personnel utilized. The headquarters staff of the Yıldırım consisted of 65 German officers and nine Turks. The latter were junior officers, used mainly for liaison purposes.⁵

Since they needed German assistance urgently, the Ottoman headquarters could not raise any substantive objections to this plan. The German headquarters set aside 5 million gold liras for the plan and promised to provide for the requirements of the soldiers and batteries. They would establish wireless stations and bring in aviator detachments. In sum, they provided for all the requirements of this expedition. Moreover, the Ottoman troops struggling in Romania were ordered to be brought back for the undertaking.⁶ The testimony of the American consul at Aleppo shows the enthusiasm for the recapturing of Baghdad:

While en route from Aleppo during the last week in May I met many train loads of troops, ammunition and great quantities of heavy artillery. I spoke to an Austrian officer about this business, who confirmed the fact that transports of heavy artillery on an intensive scale were going on. I imagine from what I saw that some of these guns were 8" or 9" guns ... I want to convey the idea that the attack on Baghdad is certain. The information was also confirmed all along my line of journey. Aviators were seen going south in good numbers.

While in Constantinople from May 29th to July 19th may thousands of troops were sent in that direction which proves that an effort is to be made at an early date in the attempt to re-take Baghdad at all costs.⁷

Besides the transportation of troops to Iraq, plans were also made for the extension of the Baghdad railroad to Mosul and the production of *shahtur* boats for sailing troops toward Baghdad along the Euphrates. Some of these plans were put into effect, especially those regarding the production of boats.⁸

On the other hand, the British troops in the Sinai front were intensifying their preparations for the capture of Palestine, and this process coincided with the Ottoman organization for an offensive to recapture Baghdad. Both the

exploratory flights of the Ottoman aviators and the Bedouin intelligence reports made it clear to Cemal Pasha that a third, larger attack against Gaza was imminent. The appointment of General Allenby, who was famous with his devoutness and bravery, as the commander-in-chief of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force with broad authority made it obvious that the British side was seriously considering the invasion of Palestine.⁹

Unlike the situation on the Sinai front, although the Ottoman Empire had lost its provincial capital, Baghdad, the state of affairs on the Iraqi front had no sign of urgency. Following their victory in Baghdad, the British troops proceeded to repair existing railroads and to start construction of new ones. Therefore, in the eyes of the Turkish commanders, the British expedition in Iraq had reached its natural boundaries for the time being and they did not expect any British advance on this front in the near future.¹⁰

Moreover, the situation of the Ottoman troops in Aleppo, the Ottoman 7th Army, which had been reserved for recapturing Baghdad, was not bright and the means the Ottoman army had in hand made the Baghdad project physically impossible. According to the remarks of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), the commander of the 7th Army:

The effectiveness of the divisions which would carry out the venture are weak and low in value. After two months' marching they would be nothing more than a rabble – to use a slight exaggeration. Our *shakturs* and camels cannot compare with the enemy's railroads and ships to Baghdad. Finally, one of the surest indications of the futility of the plan is that after two days' marching regiments would melt away.¹¹

Furthermore, the troops on the Sinai front were in dire need of reinforcement. According to Von Kress, epidemics and desertions had greatly weakened the effectiveness of the army. The soldiers who were sent to Gaza to make up for the lack of troops arrived there "ruefully."¹² Some 25 percent of the reinforcements sent from Anatolia to cover the manpower shortage deserted before they arrived at their destinations.¹³ Moreover, the gap in the amount of soldiers on the British and Ottoman sides had tripled in the five months after the second battle of Gaza. Von Kress therefore urged Cemal to insist that Enver send the new troops that were in Aleppo for the offensive against Baghdad to the Sinai front instead.¹⁴

In spite of all these considerations, Enver was extremely reluctant to abandon the Baghdad enterprise initially. Persuading him of the necessity of reinforcing in Gaza cost the Ottoman side five months that would have been invaluable for preparing the Sinai front to react to a strong British attack.¹⁵ In this period, the British side nearly completed all their preparations for a third attack. In the end, Enver finally understood the critical situation of the Sinai front and decided that a defeat there would "paralyze his undertaking to invade Baghdad" and he was therefore convinced to send the 7th Army to the Sinai front.¹⁶

After Enver had been persuaded, the position of Falkenhayn was another issue that would cause problems between Enver, Cemal, and Falkenhayn himself. Sending him back to Germany meant abandoning Germany's military and monetary assistance, which was greatly needed to strengthen the army in Palestine and would also be necessary later for recapturing Baghdad. Therefore, the Falkenhayn problem needed to be solved as early as possible to get German assistance for both fronts. The first option was to put him under the command of Cemal Pasha, but he did not accept this proposal.¹⁷ On the other hand, Cemal was strongly opposed to putting the Ottoman forces in Syria under Falkenhayn's command, since this would mean, to all intents and purposes, the abolition of his authority in Syria.¹⁸ In addition, Cemal opposed the strategy Enver and Falkenhayn wanted to adopt on the Sinai front. They planned to make an offensive against the British forces on the Gaza front by surrounding them in the desert. Cemal, however, considered Palestine the most critical front in the Ottoman Empire and proposed to reinforce it as strongly as possible with troops brought in from other fronts.¹⁹ In his telegram to Enver some three months before the fall of Jerusalem, Cemal expressed his opposition to the former's plans with very strong language:

I would like to clarify that I cannot consent to Falkenhayn, who drove a nail into the Germans in Verdun, driving a[nother] nail into us in Sinai, in the territory of my army, as long as I command the 4th Army ... I regard it as the strongest treason [*vatansızlık*] to tolerate an action that would be a disaster for the salvation of the fatherland.²⁰

As such, the only solution was to recall Cemal Pasha to Istanbul. Indeed, his replacement had been contemplated in Istanbul with the change of the military situation in Sinai in favor of the British from the beginning of February 1917. The central government considered his removal necessary to win over the Arabs in this critical time. Furthermore, any moderation of the state's Arab policy and any reconciliation with the Arabs would require his dismissal.²¹ However, such a course of action was inconvenient for two reasons: First, both German and Turkish authorities believed in the necessity of Cemal's "iron fist" in Syria and Palestine for maintaining "public order" in those regions. Therefore, his dismissal risked inviting an uprising in Syria. Secondly, his departure from Syria could have caused problems for the provisioning of the army corps in the Syrian provinces.²²

Another issue was the emergence of a possible Turco-German conflict with the appointment of a Christian commander as the head of the army. It was almost certain that putting all the armies in Syria and Iraq under a German commander would increase tensions between Ottoman and German soldiers. Therefore, almost all the Turkish commanders, and particularly Cemal Pasha and Mustafa Kemal, were opposed to the idea of combining the armies in these two districts under a non-Muslim commander and insisted on putting Falkenhayn under the command of a Muslim general.²³ As expected, most

people in pro-Ottoman circles regarded the emergence of the Yıldırım with little sympathy and saw it as a harmful undertaking for the wealth and power of Turkey.²⁴

However, the appointment of Falkenhayn would both guarantee German assistance and ensure that the troops on the Sinai front would be reorganized in a way that would fit Enver's plans for an offensive. In his telegram to Cemal, he explained that he had sent the 7th Army from Aleppo to Gaza to deal a major offensive blow to the British forces there and to throw them out of the Sinai peninsula.²⁵ In agreement with the German headquarters, Enver decided to appoint Falkenhayn as commander-in-chief of the armies in Iraq and Syria on 26 September – only one month before the start of the third battle in Gaza. Before he made this decision, he sent a long telegram to Cemal when he was in Germany and convinced him that protecting Palestine from the British occupation would only be possible if the resources reserved for the recapturing of Baghdad were transferred there. He also implied that this necessitated putting these troops under the command of Falkenhayn. That is to say, German assistance was contingent on Falkenhayn's appointment to the Sinai front. Enver also stressed that Cemal's presence was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of public order in Syria.²⁶ As a result, Cemal Pasha's 4th Army was abolished and a new commandship was created to rehabilitate his tarnished honor, the general commandship of Syria and west Arabia. His headquarters were to be established in Damascus and his only military task was to secure the provisioning of the Yıldırım groups.²⁷

Immediately, after this decision, on 5 October, the British troops managed to capture Gaza and, then, on 9 December, moved on toward Jerusalem. After it became apparent that Jerusalem would fall to the British, Cemal appealed to Enver to allow him to return to Istanbul. In his telegram to Enver on 20 November, he stated that, after the relocation of the Yıldırım's headquarters to Nazareth, he had "come to a position that did not allow him to stay in Syria." He noted that the towns of Acre and Kerak were included in the Yıldırım's region of control and that soon Damascus would be added to them. When this happened, his presence there would be both redundant and counter-productive. Therefore, he advised Enver, leaving all moral thoughts aside, to accept the following suggestions: First, to abrogate the general commandship of Syria and west Arabia and to re-create the 4th Army again under the command of Mersinli Cemal Pasha and leave the organization of Arab affairs to this army, which would be attached to the central headquarters directly. Secondly, Cemal proposed that the Yıldırım Army Groups should have the authorization to give orders to the 4th Army regarding the provisioning and transport of troops. He particularly stressed that Enver should entrust the organization of Arab affairs to Mersinli Cemal Pasha to prevent the Germans from increasing their authority over Syria.²⁸ Mersinli Cemal had an advanced grasp of Arabic, and he had been employed in the region for a long time. Therefore, the Arabs and tribes in the region had significant respect for him.²⁹

In a supplementary telegram that he sent three days later, Cemal described the way in which he should be removed from duty: It should be announced that he would be off-duty for five months due to health problems. In the same telegram, he emphasized that, if it were necessary, he would always be ready to return to his post in Syria.³⁰ On the same day, Enver answered his telegram and accepted all his proposals.³¹ Cemal notified Falkenhayn of his departure. The latter was pleased with this development and expressed sorrow at not having been able to find a way to work together.³² After that, Cemal packed his house and sent his property to Istanbul.³³ On 13 December he left Damascus for Istanbul.³⁴ Thus an important era in the history of Syria came to a close.

Notes

- 1 For the process behind the decision to recapture Baghdad, see: *Birinci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk Harbi IV/III*, Ankara: Genel Kurmay Basımevi, 1986, pp. 69–74.
- 2 Hüseyin Hüsnü Emir (Erkilet), *Yıldırım*, Ankara: ATASE Yayınları, 2002, p. 2; A. P. Wavell, *The Palestine Campaigns*, London, 1928, pp. 82, 90.
- 3 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 1/7, Enver to Talat, Damascus, 16 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (16 November 1917); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Bernstoff to AA, Constantinople, 24 November 1917.
- 4 *Yıldırım*, p. 13; for the observations of the American consul in Damascus regarding the preparations to recapture Baghdad, see: **TNA**, FO 371/3058, Grahame to FO, Paris, 10 June 1917. For a description of the process of establishing the *Yıldırım*, see: *Birinci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk Harbi IV/III*, pp. 83–88.
- 5 Liman von Sanders, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, p. 219; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Bernstoff to Foreign Ministry (transmitting Graf Schdenburg, Damascus), Constantinople, 21 November 1917.
- 6 **TNA**, FO 371/3058, Grahame to FO, Paris, 10 June 1917.
- 7 **TNA**, FO 371/3058, British ambassador in Washington to FO, Washington, 30 August 1917.
- 8 *Yıldırım*, pp. 20–23.
- 9 Von Kress to Cemal, 10 August 1917, in *Yıldırım*, p. 52.
- 10 *Yıldırım*, p. 37.
- 11 **TNA**, FO 370/215, Mustapha Kemal to Enver Pasha, 30 September 1917; the Turkish version of this report is available at: *Yıldırım*, p. 73. However, the date of the document is written as 20 September. When we take the date on which the 4th Army was abolished and Falkenhayn was appointed as the commander of the troops in Syria – 26 September – 20 September is more plausible as the date of this document.
- 12 Von Kress to Cemal, 10 August 1917, in *Yıldırım*, p. 53; **BA-MA**, RM 5/2322, Humann to the Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Constantinople, 16 September 1917.
- 13 **TNA**, FO 371/3050, Sykes to FO, Cairo, 6 July 1917.
- 14 Von Kress to Cemal, 10 August 1917, in *Yıldırım*, p. 53; **BA-MA**, RM 5/2322, Humann to the Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Constantinople, 16 September 1917.
- 15 Indeed, Enver had not changed his mind about recapturing Baghdad even when he was sending Falkenhayn to Gaza. He only delayed this plan as a result of increasing pressure regarding the necessity of reinforcing Gaza. He explained his ideas on this issue in a telegram that was sent to Cemal Paşa. For further details see: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/64, Enver to Cemal, 3 Eylül 1333 (3 September 1917).

- 16 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/62, Enver to Cemal, 1 Eylül 1333 (1 September 1333).
- 17 *Yıldırım*, pp. 48–58.
- 18 **TNA**, FO 371/3058, Rumbold to FO, Bern, 4 September 1917; **BA-MA**, RM 5/2322, Humann to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Constantinople, 16 September 1917; **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Bernstoff to AA, Constantinople, 24 November 1917.
- 19 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 5/54, Cemal to Von Kress, 5 September 1917; Djemal Pasha, *Memories*, p. 188; Cemal Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 14; **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 5/46, Cemal to Enver, 29 Temmuz 1333 (29 July 1917).
- 20 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 5/54, Cemal to Enver, 5 September 1917.
- 21 **PA-AA**, Türkei 165, Bd. 41, Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg (transmitting v. Kress, Jerusalem), Constantinople, 23 February 1917.
- 22 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/62, Enver to Cemal, 1 Eylül 1333 (1 September 1917); **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Bernstoff to Foreign Ministry (transmitting Graf Schdenburg, Damascus), Constantinople, 21 November 1917.
- 23 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Bernstoff to Foreign Ministry (transmitting Graf Schdenburg, Damascus), Constantinople, 21 November 1917; **TNA**, FO 370/215, Mustapha Kemal to Enver Pasha, 30 September 1917; *Yıldırım*, pp. 75–76.
- 24 **BA-MA**, RM 5/2322, Humann to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Constantinople, 16 September 1917.
- 25 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/62, Enver to Cemal, 1 Eylül 1333 (1 September 1333). Even in the middle of September, Humann, a member of the German military mission, conveyed the same remarks from Enver. He said Enver Pasha desired to repulse the British troops from Sinai with a preventive attack before they could make sufficient preparations for an attack against Palestine. **BA-MA**, RM 5/2322, Humann to Chief of the Admiralty of Marine, Constantinople, 16 September 1917.
- 26 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/62, Enver to Cemal, 1 Eylül 1333 (1 September 1333); for the German version of the same telegram see: **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/63.
- 27 **ATASE Arşivi**, Kls, 77, Ds. 393, Fih. 30–31, Enver to 4th Army and *Yıldırım*, 26 Eylül 1333 (26 September 1917); the same document also available at: **TTK Arşivi**, EP Koleksiyonu, 4/55; and **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 3/30.
- 28 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 7/126, Cemal to Enver, 20 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (20 November 1917).
- 29 Liman von Sanders, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, p. 269.
- 30 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 8/142, Cemal to Enver, 23 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (23 November 1917).
- 31 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 8/141, Enver to Cemal, 23 Teşrin-i Sani 1333 (23 November 1917).
- 32 **TTK Arşivi**, KO Koleksiyonu 8/148, Falkenhayn to Cemal, 30 Kanun-ı Evvel 1333 (30 December 1917).
- 33 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, Bernstoff to AA (transmitting Graf Schdenburg, Damascus), Constantinople, 21 November 1917.
- 34 **PA-AA**, Türkei 177, Bd. 16, without signature to AA, 15 December 1917.

Conclusion

When Cemal Pasha departed for Syria from the Haydar Pasha station in İstanbul, he was not only determined to recapture Egypt. He also had major plans for the “re-formation” of the state in Syria, which had been “occupied” as a result of the penetration of foreign states through various means for decades.

The success of the modern centralized state in Europe in creating a “harmonious” body and the failure of the Ottoman government to prevent the dissolution of the empire over the previous years made this model the CUP’s greatest ideal. The CUP’s unshakable belief in the centrality of a strong state for solving the “insoluble” questions of the empire constituted the main reason for Cemal’s draconian rule in Syria. In this regard, immediately after his arrival in Syria, Cemal endeavored to “re-form” the state in Syria, or, in the words of the German consul in Damascus, to “re-conquer” it from foreign penetration and all local intermediaries with authoritarian measures. First of all, it is worth pointing out that throughout his governorate in Syria Cemal did not consider the possibility that Ottoman rule in Syria would come to an end following World War I. Quite the opposite, all his actions analyzed throughout the chapters of this study clearly demonstrate that he intended Ottoman rule in Syria to be permanent. Thus, to the contrary of the claims of mainstream Ottoman war propaganda, Cemal’s governorate in Syria was not a life and death struggle to revive the Ottoman state. Rather, he endeavored to “re-form” the Ottoman state in Syria for the post-war period, using the modern nation-states as a model. In this regard, the direction of Cemal’s activities in Syria and the circumstances of Syria’s urban and Bedouin society when he arrived there also open the consequences of the processes of centralization in the preceding periods up for discussion. Prior to the war, due to the character of the reform movements of pre-war times, which took local realities into consideration, and due to the competition with the Great Powers, local interest groups and some autonomous structures continued to exist as important factors in the local politics of Syria. However, Cemal saw these socially efficient groups as an impediment or barrier to the state’s direct control over its citizens in Syria. Thus, as one of the most important leaders of the ruling CUP and a significant member of the cabinet, he set out to eliminate them.

In this regard, first of all, Cemal turned his attention to the question of Arabism with force in Ottoman politics. According to him, Arabism had the potential to mobilize the sentiments of the Muslim population in Syria, which constituted the great majority of the population there, toward the Ottoman state in future. In CUP circles it had long been thought that the Arabist movement, which had some connections with foreign states, was a threat to the unity of the Ottomans. Although the CUP leaders looked for a way to compromise with the Arabists after the first Arab Congress in Paris in 1913, it can be understood from their special reports and memoirs that they did not regard the Arabists as serious reformists, but rather self-seekers caring for their own personal interests. Due to these misperceptions, the prejudices of Republican Turkey regarding the Arabs as “traitors” to the empire were based on the Unionist misunderstanding of the aims of the Arabists, and the CUP’s perception of opposition movements in general and the Arabist opposition in particular as organizations facilitating the designs of the Great Powers. It would not be an exaggeration to claim that there was at least one very strong group within the body of the CUP thinking this way.¹ However, during the CUP period, this bias was restricted to the Arabists, while the Republican Kemalist ideology generalized it to all Arabs.

The Arabist opposition, consisting mainly of the Arab notables, was considered a social “barrier” preventing the penetration of the state into the Syrian realm even before the outbreak of the war. Therefore, Cemal’s claim that he punished the Arabists because of their preparations for a rebellion in Syria seem doubtful. Rather, he eliminated the influence of the Arabist notables of Syria by executing or exiling them since they posed a potential obstacle to the direct imposition of state authority over Syria. Although Cemal’s atrocities created antipathy among the Syrian people against the state, when his long-term policy of “re-forming” the state in Syria is considered, it is reasonable to conclude that he disregarded the reaction of the Syrians of his day in order to create the ideal Syrian-Ottomans who would be loyal to Ottoman rule and opposed to any foreign influence in the future. Furthermore, by destroying the Arabist movement, he would prevent any demand for autonomy or independence during the peace negotiations after the war. Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that Cemal’s punishment of the Arabists was not aimed at abolishing Arab culture and replacing it with that of the Turks. His insistence on teaching Turkish, the official language of the empire, to the Syrians was due to his eagerness to establish direct communication between the Syrians and the Ottoman state. Yet he did nothing to erase Arab culture. Rather, he took some measures to protect the Arab heritage of Syria, such as the restoration of the monuments built by the Umayyads. In his struggle with Arabism, Cemal used an Ottomanist-Islamist discourse to gain the support of the Syrians and published a newspaper called *al-Sharq* to spread those ideas, as well as opening a new university named Selahaddin-i Eyyubi Külliyesi.

It is possible that Cemal’s harsh intervention in the Arabist movement and the execution of its members had a permanent effect on Syrian politics in the

post-Ottoman period. It can be concluded that, with the destruction of its prominent intellectuals and civil political leaders, Syrian political life was made more suitable for the ensuing military or authoritarian regimes. It can be argued that, with these executions, Cemal Pasha played a role in creating the contemporary circumstances of Syrian politics.

The outbreak of the sharif's revolt in Mecca turned the tide against the indisputable ruler of Syria and formed an opinion in the central government that Cemal's activities in Syria had triggered this revolt, although the motives of this movement were very different. When the possibility of suppressing the rebellion faded, the central government tried to find a way to moderate its Arab policy, out of the fear of Syrians developing sympathies toward the sharif. In the beginning, they planned to persuade Cemal to return from Syria. But, because of the critical military situation on the Sinai front, a change in the command of the Syrian army was abandoned. Nevertheless, there was some moderation of the state's Arab policy. Toward the end of his governorate, Cemal launched negotiations with the sharif. Following his removal at the end of the year 1917, many of his rigorous policies were abandoned. In this regard, most of the exiles in Anatolia were allowed to return to Syria. Similarly, the negotiations with the sharif for a peace agreement were continued. But the reluctance of the government to give certain guarantees and some kind of administrative autonomy to the sharif blocked a quick conclusion to these negotiations. While the process was underway, the British forces occupied Syria and interrupted these efforts.

Besides the Arabist movement, for the same reasons Cemal also intervened with his "iron fist" in the other autonomous bodies in Syria that had some kind of influence over the peoples there. To this end, he endeavored to reconstruct the relations between the Zionists, the Christian clergy, and the autonomous government of Lebanon, on the one hand, and the state, on the other, to limit their impact on the Jews, the Christians, and the Lebanese, who were seen as potentially disloyal components of Syrian society. In spite of the resistance of Germany and some circles in Istanbul, due to Cemal's strong personality, some serious steps were taken to check the Zionist movement: First, all non-Ottoman Jews were put under the direct authority of the state through naturalization. Those who did not accept Ottoman citizenship were deported. Second, the prominent leaders of the Zionist organization were sent into exile. It is worth emphasizing that Cemal's actions were not aimed at the destruction of the Jews due to an anti-Semitic worldview. Nor he did endeavor to Turkify Palestine by exiling the Jews. The evacuation of Jaffa makes this clear. Although, in the beginning, Cemal saw the evacuation of Jaffa as an opportunity to weaken the Zionist movement, this plan was later abandoned and the Jews were distributed to the various cities of Palestine for military reasons.

The immunity of the Christian clergy was another issue that Cemal dealt with. Since most of the clergy, especially the Maronites, were agents of French influence in Syria, it was important for Cemal to bring them under state

control. To this end, during Cemal's rule, the Maronite patriarch came to be appointed by the decree of the Ottoman sultan. For the first time, similar actions to subjugate the clergy of the other Christian sects were undertaken. Thus, the "uncrowned king" of Syria gave the message to the Christian communities that the only power in Syria that they could rely on was that of the Ottoman government. Thus, another intermediary between the state and its citizens was checked. With these policies against the Christians, Cemal tried to abolish the traditions of the *millet* system for the empire's non-Muslims.

The Lebanese government was subjected to a similar transformation. With the intervention of Cemal Pasha, for the first time in the history of the autonomous government of Lebanon, a Muslim Turk, Ali Münif Bey, was appointed as its governor. As a leading Unionist, Ali Münif Bey undertook the integration of Lebanon into the Ottoman administrative system and the transformation of Lebanon into an ordinary province of the empire.

Cemal's treatment of the Armenian deportees can be assessed in a similar way. As mentioned before, in contrast to Talat Pasha's attitude of neglect toward the Armenians, Cemal was part of the "pro-Armenian" party of the CUP and wanted to integrate them into Syrian society as a politically harmless minority (*cüziyet*), dispersing them throughout the various regions of Syria. But it should be clarified that this was not a kind of ethnic engineering aimed at the Turkification of the Armenians. Rather, it was intended to render them unable to cause political problems for the goals of the CUP.

Quite the reverse of the claims in the existing literature, Cemal intervened in both the deportation and settlement of the Armenians to improve the process as much as he could. Throughout this time, he struggled with the interventions of the central government, led by Talat, and, as a result of his strong influence among CUP circles and his absolute authority in Syria, he managed to save many Armenians from a disastrous end. Cemal saw the mistreatment of the deportees as threatening to make the state appear weak in the eyes of its citizens. This was completely at odds with his plans for the region and was thus another reason for his intervention in the process of deportation and settlement. He also did not follow a serious policy of converting the Armenians to Islam. His orphanages were not aimed at the Islamization of the Armenian children protected there. Rather, Islamization was only a pretext to protect them from the interventions of the "anti-Armenian" party.

While trying to remove the intermediaries from Syria's social sphere, Cemal also exerted significant efforts in the struggle against foreign influence. Foreign states competed with the Ottoman government for the sympathy of the Syrians and created a barrier for the state's control over the country for years as a result of the privileges provided by the capitulations. In this regard, Cemal first made an effort to erase the French influence in Syria, seizing all the institutions established directly or indirectly by France and deporting those who spread French influence, such as priests and nurses. Similarly, he did his best to forestall any replacement of France by Ottoman allies such as Germany or Austria. Any intervention by a representative of Germany or any

other state was strenuously rejected by Cemal. During his period of rule, the pasha blocked, to a considerable extent, any cultural propaganda from Germany and Austria, since he considered it a threat to the establishment of the authority of the state in Syria. All these undertakings were carried out primarily by Turkish bureaucrats who were members of the CUP, since Cemal only trusted the Unionist Turks in his struggle against the internal and external “enemies” of Ottoman unity. Cemal’s preference for Turks was not due to him seeing the Arabs as second-class citizens of the empire. The appointment of many of the Arab bureaucrats to Anatolian provinces, which were primarily populated by Turks, is the most obvious proof of Cemal’s indifference to ethnicity in his governmental policies.

Cemal Pasha also worked to create the necessary means and institutions to assert the state’s control over the bodies and minds of the Syrians. In this sense, the process of conscription, which began with the military mobilization for the expedition against Egypt, offered a good opportunity for Cemal to control the bodies of Syrian men and impose discipline on them, which constituted an important part of what it meant to be a modern state. At the beginning of the war, many of the Syrians willingly entered military service with enthusiasm for the Egyptian campaign. But the failure of the first expedition caused a loss of motivation among the Arab soldiers. In addition, the hardships of military life, combined with constant delays to the second expedition and the increasing impact of Cemal’s “iron fist” over Syria, made military life a nightmare for the Arab soldiers. Furthermore, some of them were employed in labor battalions. Most of the construction works carried out by Cemal in Syria were the product of labor battalions of conscripted Syrians. The Arabs, who had never experienced military life on this scale before, found military service difficult. As a result, desertions in the army considerably increased. Cemal made a considerable effort to suppress their banditry throughout the war. It is worth mentioning that Cemal did not trust non-Muslims in military service and, unlike the Muslims, they were mainly employed in the labor battalions and other auxiliary services.

In addition, Cemal opened new educational institutions to Ottomanize the minds of the Syrian people under the supervision of the prominent female intellectual Halide Edib. This Ottomanization was not, however, a cultural transformation of the Arabs into Turks. Rather, it aimed at developing a sense of Ottomanness among the Syrians, nourished by an antagonism to the Great Powers. Cemal opened schools both in Turkish and Arabic. He intended to modernize Syria with Ottoman institutions, rather than those of the Great Powers, and this resulted, according to him, in a shift in the sentiments of the Arabs toward the Ottoman state. Cemal also attempted to transform Syria’s cities to increase the visibility of the state, its ability to penetrate urban spaces, and its prestige in the eyes of the Syrians. In this regard, he opened new avenues as well as widening existing ones. Moreover, dead-end streets were transformed to allow free passage. One aim of all these construction and educational undertakings was to make Syria as developed as Egypt, which

had become an ideally developed country, in the eyes of the Syrians, following the British invasion. Finally, in the context of his construction works, some historical monuments were restored on his orders. In such projects, he not only attempted to restore Ottoman and Byzantine buildings, but also monuments belonging to the early periods of Islam constructed by the Arabs.

Cemal's policy toward the tribal and nomadic Arab societies in Syria was rather different than those described above. Quite the reverse of his predecessors' policy of bringing the tribes under state control and settling them, Cemal maintained the traditional imperial policy of giving freedom of action to these communities because of the circumstances of the war. He was afraid of Great Britain provoking a rebellion among the Bedouin and the Druze tribes. Here, the government felt itself comparatively unrivaled until the outbreak of the Sharifian revolt. This uprising compelled the government to invest further in securing the loyalties of the tribal and nomadic societies. In spite of the British gold offered to these communities, almost all of the great tribal dynasties led by chiefs such as Ibn Rashid, Nuri Shaalan, and Ibn Saud did not show open hostility to the Ottomans to the very end of the war. When Faysal's failure to go beyond Akaba toward the north until the end of the war is taken into consideration, this reality becomes even clearer.

In addition to these social and political issues, Cemal had to struggle with disastrous famine and epidemics, which dealt the heaviest blow to his plans for Syria. Neither his policy on Arabism nor any of his other policies caused as much antipathy toward the Ottoman government as did the social impact of the famine. The decrease in the quantity of grain due to the conscription of Syria's agricultural labor increased the impact of the military requisitions, which antagonized the peasants against the state. The problems of provisioning in the cities created similar results among urban societies. However, Cemal's rule was not the only cause of the famine; the Entente states used famine as a weapon to push the Arabs to revolt against the Ottoman authority. At the same time, as a result of malnutrition, several epidemic diseases caused the death of considerable numbers of people. The Ottoman struggle against these epidemics also provided the state with control over the bodies of its citizens in a modern form.

All these projects, which were implemented with an "iron fist" in Syria, created significant dissatisfaction among the peoples there. However, it is worth mentioning that today's image of Cemal Pasha al-Saffah (bloodthirsty) did not emerge as a result of Cemal's atrocities. It was rather the result of subsequent processes of nationalization. The Arab nationalists, who became influential in Syrian society following the end of Ottoman rule, utilized the atrocities of Cemal Pasha to other the Ottoman period.² Thus, the image of Cemal Pasha was transformed into *al-Saffah* during the process of the nationalization of Syrian society following the termination of Ottoman rule.

As for Cemal's relations with the central government during his governorate, in spite of some problems emanating from the actions by the government that contradicted his policies, Cemal enjoyed considerable harmony with the

central government on many issues and received the consent of the central bureaucracy for his activities. His most important confrontation with the Ottoman center was on the issue of the Armenian deportees. Cemal was opposed to the policies of the government and adopted a protective attitude toward the Armenians. On the other hand, regarding the issue of the Arab executions, the central government was more lenient and made some attempts to prevent their implementation. Apart from these, as a member of the acting cabinet, Cemal was in harmony with the central government and received the consent of his friends in Istanbul in all his policies.

Notes

- 1 Some attempts by prominent CUP members to save Arabists from execution demonstrate that there was an opposition within the body of the CUP against Cemal's actions against the Arabists. The governor of Beirut, Azmi Bey, intervened and saved Rıza es-Sulh from death: Arslan, *Siratu Zatiyya*, p. 139. Similarly, Talat Pasha endeavored several times to save Abd al-Hamid Zahrawi from his fate; Birgen, *İttihat ve Terakki'de On Sene*, p. 272; and he offered to help Abdulwahab el-Inglizi escape abroad: Kurd Ali, *Mudhakkirat*, pp. 152–153.
- 2 For a study on the influence of the Arab nationalists in post-Ottoman Syria, see: Philip S. Khoury, "The Paradoxical in the Arab Nationalism: Interwar Syria Revisited," in James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni (eds.), *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, pp. 273–287.

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